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WE ARE WITNESSING a new and a most interesting division of the Supreme Court of the United States. This has just been clearly illustrated by its vote of five to four that the Indiana law imposing a graduated scale of license fees according to the number of chain stores within the State is constitutional. Five to four votes have been common enough in the past, but usually the liberals on the court have been in the minority. This time the majority comprised the Chief Justice and Justices Roberts, Brandeis, Holmes, and Stone. The conservatives and reactionaries—Justices Sutherland, Van Devanter, McReynolds, and Butler—formed the minority. There is every indication, we are glad to say, that we shall see more and more divisions of this kind. Beyond question the appointment of Mr. Roberts marks a great gain for liberalism, and Mr. Hughes's occasionally liberal votes are in themselves encouraging. The Indiana decision is of great importance. Every State now has it within its power to limit definitely the number of stores which any company may open within its borders. There are similar cases pending for North Carolina and Mississippi and there is no doubt that legislation of this kind will now be passed in those Southern and Southwestern States which have not yet acted. The majority of the court held that "the fact that a statute discriminates in favor of a certain class does not make it arbitrary, if the discrimination is founded upon a reasonable distinction."

FOR SHEER EFFRONTERY and unsurpassable impudence commend us to the speech of Congressman Tilson of Connecticut at White Plains recently. Appearing before the Women's Republican Club, he declared that Mr. Hoover's "steady hand at the helm kept the recent [*sic*] depression from being as bad as other depressions, and Mr. Hoover's guidance can be counted the great factor in saving this country from the serious economic conditions found in other parts of the world." Doubtless he was moved to this bit of oratory by the decorations of the room in which he spoke: "Two large signs were displayed depicting a golden sun emerging from pink and blue clouds. On the sun appeared the word 'Prosperity,' and on the clouds were the words 'Happy Days Are Here Again.'" How delighted our 7,000,000 of unemployed must be by the reports of this meeting! But somehow the harmony chorus isn't quite so complete as it ought to be. We commend to Mr. Tilson and the Westchester County women the following statement made the next day by Dean Wallace B. Donham of the Harvard School of Business Administration:

> America faces the dole system unless the federal government between now and next winter starts work on a large scale. . . . Capitalism is on trial. . . . Our present situation both here and in all the great industrial nations of the world is a major breakdown of capitalism.

Even the American Legion is getting out of hand. Its Executive Committee demands an immediate non-political conference to seek a solution for the crisis, and declares that there are 750,000 veterans still without work in Mr. Tilson's "recent" depression.

TWO MILLION ACRES more of winter wheat for 1931 than for 1930 in eleven countries, with complete returns from Russia not available, is the news with which the Department of Agriculture speeded on their way the American delegates to the wheat parley at London. What with uncertainty about the Russian crop and its probable disposition, and equal uncertainty about the Federal Farm Board policy in disposing of its storage wheat, Russia and the United States easily hold the center of the stage at the London conference, but even without those two countries the estimated surplus of 704,000,000 bushels in Canada, Argentina, and Australia, according to data which the conference appears to be using, nearly equals the estimated importers' requirements of 784,000,000 bushels for the year ending next August, some 584,000,000 bushels of which are reported to have been already shipped, while the United States is counted upon to show a surplus of 240,000,000 bushels and Russia of 120,000,000 bushels. The London delegates obviously have a hard job before them. Few people seriously believe that any international agreement can bring about a limitation of production, and neither Great Britain nor Russia looks with favor upon any kind of quota scheme that would restrict exportation. There is left the alternative of an international marketing organization with its hope of price stabilization, but that again seems hardly practical unless both the United States and Russia join and the great impediment of tariff

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barriers is removed. On the whole, the world seems likely to continue to see for some time yet the anomaly of vast surpluses of wheat while millions of men and women go hungry.

WHAT'S this? A branch of the American Legion in New York City declaring that

> . . . our fallen comrades who threw to us the torch did not intend it to be a perpetual pillar of hate to be transmitted to children even to the third and fourth generations . . . therefore be it
>
> *Resolved,* By the Lexington Post that we urge either new treaties or the revision of old treaties so that love and friendship may supplant envy and hate in the minds of generations in Europe yet unborn and insure that our children's children may never be drawn into the horrors of another war.

This actually happened, and at a dinner given to former German and Austrian soldiers (ex-Huns) who are now either American citizens or about to become such, on which occasion a former German officer was an honored guest. Nothing that has come from the Legion seems to us finer and wiser than this. It was precisely the position taken by *The Nation* in its first issue after the publication of the Versailles treaty in May, 1919—for which it was, of course, roundly abused and denounced by almost everybody.

WHY IS AMERICA the most lawless of countries? The more we ask ourselves this question, the more we are compelled to answer that it is because of the persistent and consistent violation of the laws and the Constitution of the United States by the officials sworn to uphold them. We are moved to this comment just now because of a disgraceful occurrence in New York City on May 15. Shortly before noon a perfectly orderly meeting was held in Battery Park to protest against the deportation of a Chinese student by the United States government. What happened is thus laconically described by the New York *Times*:

> A police emergency truck rolled into the lower end of Battery Park shortly before noon yesterday. Two minutes later the park was filled with screaming women and men fleeing from the night sticks of fifteen policemen, and the "demonstration" . . . was over.

A dozen or more Communists, the *Times* adds, left the park with bruised and bleeding heads, and so did a newspaper photographer who did not have time to place his police card in his hat and had his camera smashed, besides being arrested on a charge of disorderly conduct. In this case the lawbreakers were plainly the police. The use of night sticks on this occasion was inexcusable. Any decent responsible policeman would have shooed away the crowd—if he had the right to shoo it—without having to lift a finger. There was not the slightest jeopardizing of order. It was simply an unqualifiedly brutal and lawless attack by men in uniform. This is the best way that we know of to make anarchists and Communists, and to inculcate disloyalty to the United States and its institutions.

IT IS WELCOME NEWS that the faculties of Cornell and Ohio State universities have recommended to their respective boards of trustees that compulsory military training among their students be abolished. Ohio State, with 3,380 men undergoing compulsory training, was last fall credited with having the largest R. O. T. C. unit in the country, while Cornell's unit was fifth in size. During the fiscal year 1929-30 the War Department spent $208,326.66 to train the Ohio State students, of which amount $141,733.04 went to pay the fifty-two army instructors detailed to the school by the department. Cornell's military bill in the same period amounted to $157,838.12. In both cases the action of the faculties followed strong protests against compulsory training by the students themselves. Public opinion also is credited with having forced the War Department to abandon its plans for the night air maneuvers over New York City which had been scheduled for May 22. The daytime maneuvers over various cities are being held as planned, but even these are being subjected to vigorous criticism from many organizations that do not ordinarily concern themselves with pacifism or militarism. It would be well for the War Policies Commission sitting in Washington to consider this increasing sentiment against militarism before it reaches any final decision on the war program it is fashioning.

FAIR WARNING that there may be trouble in Haiti if the United States delays much longer fulfilment of its promise to Haitianize the domestic government services is sounded in a letter to President Hoover signed by seven members of the national board of the American Civil Liberties Union. The letter also strongly urges that the withdrawal of the marines be expedited. According to the signers, the recommendation of the Hoover Commission that there be a gradual withdrawal of all Americans, including both civil and military members of the occupationary force, is not being carried out. They declare that unless this program is pressed, they fear "there may again be outbursts of violent protests against the American occupation. Advices from Haiti are none too reassuring that the Haitian people will indefinitely tolerate an unchanged situation." Mr. Hoover won sincere applause from his countrymen when he accepted the recommendations of his Haitian commission. His action was interpreted by many as a definite turning-point in the imperialistic policy Washington had been pursuing in the Caribbean area. The applause may have been premature, however. Unless Mr. Hoover acts at once, his delay may lead to further serious difficulties in Haiti.

THE QUESTION OF SILVER, increasingly discussed in a number of countries during the past few months, seems likely to be taken up in the near future by an international conference, if the countries particularly interested can agree upon how the conference shall be called. China, which has a silver instead of a gold basis for its currency, appears to be the logical country to ask for a conference, since the fall in the price of silver from over sixty cents per ounce to less than thirty cents has reduced by more than 50 per cent the ability of China to buy goods abroad. The effect upon the United States is seen in an abrupt falling off of trade with China by about one-half in the past eighteen months; in March the decline was 18 per cent compared with February. The fall in the price of silver has been ascribed largely to the dumping of silver bullion by the government of India in pursuit of its policy of putting Indian currency on a gold basis, but overproduction in this country and Mexico compared with world demand, the lowering of

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production costs, and the general slump in world business have been contributing causes. Financial opinion would almost certainly oppose any attempt by a conference to bring about bimetallism anywhere, but something might be done to secure agreements limiting production, restraining dumping, and providing for the gradual disposition of accumulated stocks of bullion and coin.

LUIS CABRERA, one of the leading lawyers of Mexico and formerly minister of finance in the Carranza Government, was arrested on the street in Mexico City by the military authorities on May 9, was held incomunicado during the night, and in the early morning was deported by airplane to Guatemala, despite legal proceedings instituted by his family immediately on receiving news of his arrest. Two days after the arrest the government gave out word that Señor Cabrera was the leader of a plot to overthrow the government of Ortiz Rubio and attempt the life of the President himself, and that he had been allowed to leave for Guatemala at his own request. Both statements are flatly denied by the friends of Señor Cabrera, and no evidence of the charges has been adduced. A far more plausible explanation of the action of the government (apparently wholly illegal) may be found in its profound irritation at the outspoken criticism of the present regime made by Señor Cabrera in an article published in *Excelsior* on November 10 last and reprinted in *The Nation* of December 31 under the title The Balance Sheet of the Revolution. In a lecture delivered on January 30 at the National Library Señor Cabrera, who during recent years has withdrawn entirely from active participation in politics, amplified his charge that the present government and its immediate predecessors have almost wholly failed to live up to the principles of the revolution in its three chief points, namely, political reform, redistribution of lands, and emancipation of labor. No government can make satisfactory answer to such criticism by illegal deportation of a leading citizen on unproved charges, and every friend of liberty in Mexico will be on the alert to learn the outcome of this case.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S decision to abandon further airship construction is altogether commendable. A nation as hard up as England has no excuse for wasting millions in experimenting with this type of aircraft, and Mr. MacDonald is the more ready to suspend operations because England will benefit by the experiments that will be carried on in the United States and Germany. In the latter country the Zeppelins have been more successful than elsewhere, but the question remains whether that is not largely due to the genius of certain of the men connected with the enterprise from the beginning, and latterly to Dr. Eckener, who has, however, himself had some extraordinarily fortunate escapes. Mr. MacDonald's further reason is that almost all his experts were killed in the disaster to the R-101. With due regard to their gallantry it cannot be affirmed that the English dirigible experts have ever ranked with those on the Continent. We frankly wish that our own government would cease to squander large sums upon these air monsters, whose value in war time is even more disputable than in peace time, which cannot be used in winter storms, and which may be put out of the reckoning at any time by further developments of the heavier-than-air machine. Of the latter an example is the recent introduction by the Junkers of the first Diesel airplane motor and its adoption for experimental purposes by the German Lufthansa.

DAVID BELASCO, who died on May 14, was described in the fulsome praise of the dead which is always voiced by newspapers as one who marked the end of an era. For more than fifty years he lived, breathed, and had his being in the life of the stage. When he began to interest himself in all aspects of the production of plays, the theater in the United States was at a distressingly low ebb. Painted back drops that varied little from scene to scene and pasteboard leaves gummed on to a foundation of gauze constituted the "scenery." The properties were acceptable as they were durable and not too heavy to lift easily. Mr. Belasco descended upon this make-believe in a veritable storm of realism. Where the set called for a stairway, he built one that the actors could walk up and down; where furnishings of a certain period were prescribed, the audience could be sure that that period and only that was represented before their eyes. Not only was every article on the stage of the most relentless authenticity, but off stage the same care and truthfulness prevailed. Did the actors exit into a garden? Then into a garden they exited, with box trees and potted plants to heighten the illusion. It remains only to say that once Mr. Belasco had firmly established his genius at realism, the stage began deserting realism as rapidly as possible. Not to revert to pasteboard leaves, but to renounce leaves altogether. The modern idea of stagecraft, which believes that the illusion is created in the mind of the spectator and not in his eye, was foreign to David Belasco. His era was useful and instructive; but its passing was inevitable.

PUBLIC DINNERS are frequently a bore. Public testimonial dinners at which some luckless individual hears himself the recipient of flowery encomiums and then makes a feeble effort to reply are more often a bore than not. But on May 14 in New York City there was held a testimonial dinner that from start to finish was nothing less than a memorable, exciting, and altogether moving occasion. This was the dinner given in honor of James Weldon Johnson on his retirement from his work as secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. It was a far cry from a welfare dinner attended by both races about thirty years ago, when the white participants were bitterly lampooned in the press for having publicly dined with Negroes, to the dinner given for Mr. Johnson. At the latter there were hundreds of guests, both white and colored; the dinner was held at one of the largest of the New York hotels; the most obvious spirit of good-will prevailed. More than that, the program, made up of agreeably short speeches by various associates and admirers of Mr. Johnson through his long life as song-writer, poet, diplomat, and public man, was varied and interesting throughout. And the reply of the guest of honor was long, composed, free of false modesty, admirably phrased, and evidenced sufficient emotional strain without reducing its author to speechless embarrassment. There are few men in the country of whatever color who could have called forth such whole-hearted tributes from persons so enlightened; there are few who could have responded to these tributes with such distinction.

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An Army of Four Million Men

THE head of the army, General Douglas MacArthur, Chief of Staff, appeared on May 13 before the War Policies Commission and revealed the War Department's plan for drafting the man power and material resources of the nation on the outbreak of war. It calls for the immediate mobilization of 4,000,000 men, and for the seizure of all federal, State, county, and municipal buildings to house and shelter troops in place of the huge cantonments of the last war. Purchases of the 4,000 essential items (there are 700,000 on the War Department's shopping list) are to be allocated *in advance*—now—and not to be regulated by competitive bidding, but the contract is to be so drawn as to limit profiteering and "to deal effectively with the over-acquisitive [!] contractor." None the less, there is to be set up "an agency to determine prices for general government buying," so that "the government will not necessarily upset economic and industrial conditions." "Price-control efforts," we further learn, "will be directed gradually, and in general recognition of their necessity and reasonableness."

In other words, the whole pretense that there will be conscription of wealth as well as of men is frankly abandoned. We are again to tear the conscripted man, willing or unwilling, from his home and deprive him as ruthlessly as we please of his right to life, but we are again to treat our great capitalists with courtesy and all consideration. So much for the American Legion's demand since 1922 that "dollars as well as men be drafted" in the event of war. General MacArthur thus not only scorned the Legion, but he went out of his way to oppose Bernard M. Baruch's plan for "price-freezing" at the outset of war, under which prices would be stabilized by federal law at a level existing on a designated "normal date." There is nothing in General MacArthur's suggestions which really offers sound opposition to the profiteering that disgraced our last war. Who would run his "agency to determine prices for general government buying"? The army? Who will be in the army then? The day after war is declared the leading industrialists will be in it. For at previous hearings it has been openly admitted that the War Department has already commissioned no less than 14,000 industrialists throughout the country as "contact men." This is fully half, if not more than half, of the entire number of reserve officers in the German army at the outbreak of the war in 1914. Is there the slightest prospect that these men will not dominate any general purchasing agency? Or that they will even be satisfied with the opinion of the present National Commander of the American Legion that a return of 7 per cent on property during the next war will be "about right"?

As for the rest of the plan, never, so far as we are aware, even in Germany in the palmiest days of its militarism, did any generals advocate the immediate military seizure of all public buildings to house troops. It is quite characteristic of the extreme militarist mind that it brushes aside all consideration of the civil government when war begins—it was this contempt of the Ludendorffs and Tirpitzes for the German civil authority and their defiance of it which as much as anything else brought about the German disaster. What would become of all our federal, State, county, and municipal governments if the military should occupy their buildings on the outbreak of war and throw them into the street? And how in heaven's name could one drill and equip four millions of men in the corridors of our federal courts or post offices or customs houses? If for no other reason, the whole MacArthur plan ought to be thrown out because of this very stupidity.

But the militarists' self-revelation does not stop there. General MacArthur and the War Department have now placed themselves squarely in the position occupied by the worst of the European militarists of 1914—they would refuse exemption from military service to anybody. No Quakers, no clergymen, no men who have given their lives to pacifism, nobody is to be exempted; all are to be dragooned into the ranks to kill or be killed. The conscience of the individual is now entirely to be violated by the Moloch of the state. What punishments our militarists will now decree for those who next dare to keep their souls stainless does not appear—death, we suppose, as was the original proposal of the officers of the Judge Advocate General's department in 1917.

As for the problems of the mobilization of civilian labor, there General MacArthur walks as lightly as he does in treating of capital. "Conscription of labor would be so resented by the workers affected that they would not lend their best efforts to the production of needed supplies." How cowardly! How unworthy of a true patriotic militarist! If conscripted men in the ranks are to have their wishes disregarded, if they are to be compelled to serve by use of torture, the rifle-butt, the solitary cell, as in 1917-19, why regard the wishes of the munition-maker? Let force be applied to him as well. Let him, too, be spread-eagled to cell doors, manacled and chained, hurled into lightless dungeons. Why permit the all-conquering state to be defied by threats of factory slacking, of unpatriotic "soldiering on the job"?

As to demobilization, General MacArthur urges a commission to deal with that problem from the start so as to be ready when the war ends. Ready for what? Victory or defeat? Ready when? Who can say? The General is careful to declare that "this plan does not envisage any particular enemy." No, indeed. How could it? There is not a country in the world today that would contemplate suicide by attacking the United States. There is not one which will ever have reason to war upon us unless we war upon it—not a single one of our foreign wars was other than of our own seeking. As for the waste of war, the General is not interested. So far as reported, he makes no provision for adequate pay or for the bonuses, insurance, or pensions that invariably cost more than the war itself.

And what hypocrites General MacArthur makes of his Commander-in-Chief, the President of the United States, and of each and every one of us! For we are the ones who declare that we won the war to end war; that we originated, signed, and ratified the pact to outlaw war, and pledged our holy word, our sacred honor, to abide by the Kellogg Pact and never again to war.

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Credit or Planning

THE address which Dr. Oliver M. W. Sprague, professor of banking at Harvard and economic adviser to the Bank of England, delivered before the English-speaking Union at London on May 12 offered cold comfort for those who imagine that the business depression has reached its lowest point and that a change for the better is close at hand. In the United States, which he had just been visiting, Dr. Sprague found the depression "more acute, if not chronic," while in the world at large two schools of doctors were seen prescribing remedies for the disease. One school insists that price declines would cease, investment revive, and workers find work if the central banks, such as the Federal Reserve, the Bank of England, and the Bank of France, would unite in flooding the world markets with credit and currency. The other school sees recovery only through the establishment of "a better equilibrium of prices and a better distribution of labor and capital."

It is surprising to find Dr. Sprague declaring that the authorities of the central banks are practically agreed in espousing the theory of economic equilibrium rather than that of cheap money, when the latter theory has for a long time been the one which the Federal Reserve Bank of New York has applied on an unprecedented scale. Long before the stock-market crash of October, 1929, the New York bank began pouring out credit and currency through heavy purchases of government bonds, and since the crash it has continued to swell the stream by lowering its discount rate and its rates on acceptances. A climax appeared to have been reached when, on May 7, it cut the discount rate from 2 to 1½ per cent, the lowest rate of any central bank in the world, and on May 13, for the fourth time in three weeks, reduced the acceptance rate, the rate for fifteen-day bills being fixed at 1 per cent and for five and six months' bills at 1¼ per cent. Meantime the volume of Federal Reserve notes outstanding increased from $1,441,715,000 on March 25 to $1,540,783,000 on May 6, notwithstanding a decline in brokers' loans in the same period from $1,908,000,000 to $1,699,000,000.

The Bank of England, too, seems to have gone over to the cheap-money theory. In October, 1929, its discount rate stood at 6½ per cent. Since that time the rate has been reduced eight times, the latest cut from 3 to 2½ per cent on May 14 bringing the rate to within ½ of 1 per cent of the lowest point ever reached in the history of the bank.

If ever cheap money could bring about an economic revival, it should have done so during the past eighteen months. The admitted object of the Federal Reserve Bank has been to encourage investment in bonds, stimulate commercial borrowing, force money out of New York into parts of the country where rates were higher, and stop the influx of gold from abroad. On no important scale have these expectations been realized. The response of the bond market, outside of government bonds, has been slight. Domestic bond financing has been confined mainly to State or municipal governments and public utilities, the latter less affected than other businesses by the depression; foreign financing has been checked by depression abroad, by political instability in various countries, and by sharp declines here in foreign-bond prices. Total capital flotations fell off more than $1,000,000,000 in the first four months of the present year compared with the corresponding period of 1930, and business failures have remained at a high level.

Is economic equilibrium, then, hovering in the offing? Dr. Sprague was not very encouraging on that point. "There seems to be," he told his hearers, "a growing unwillingness or incapacity in an individualist society to adjust itself to a changing economic condition, whereas we need to be more elastic than ever before." Something might be accomplished, he remarked, through a dictatorship, and there was also "the old-fashioned way of free play for economic forces, which will bring pressure upon everybody and enforce adjustments despite all the suffering involved." Unless, however, there is "sufficient foresight, imagination, and give-and-take" to plan and carry through the changes that must take place if economic forces are to be left to themselves, there is nothing in store for the Western world, Dr. Sprague bluntly declared, except "a slow decline" before the competition of the Russian economic regime.

Rational planning or inescapable decay, in other words, are the alternatives between which world capitalism must choose. A vast deal has been said about the superior wisdom of captains of industry and the conserving and stabilizing power wielded by the great banks, but unless the princes of the ancient house of capital show more intelligence and energy than they have displayed thus far in the business crisis, they and their system may before long be wiped out. The Western world awaits the leaders who can show whether economic planning without dictatorship can be managed, and to what ends the planning shall be directed.

Briand's Defeat

ARISTIDE BRIAND deserves better treatment at the hands of his countrymen than that accorded him by the National Assembly of France. His foreign policy, though by no means perfect, has none the less been a distinct contribution to the cause of peace in Europe. But France owes even more to this wisest of its post-war statesmen; without him in the Foreign Office the country might upon more than one occasion in the past few years have been pushed dangerously close to war by its headstrong and irresponsible jingoists. Yet the National Assembly refused to honor him by elevating him to the presidency. There he might still have guided French foreign policy, for the power of the French President in this respect has grown of late years; there he could still have worked for peace. Instead, the Parliament turned to a conservative, to Paul Doumer, president of the Senate, when it sought a successor to Gaston Doumergue.

Briand's defeat may not affect France alone; it may hold the gravest portent for all of Europe. In electing M. Doumer the Parliament did more than turn to the right; by its action it cast a shadow upon the foreign policy of Briand. Perhaps the National Assembly did not intend to have its rejection of Briand accepted as notice that France had done with his policy of moderation and reconciliation. Indeed, only five days earlier the Chamber of Deputies, by a vote of nearly nine to one, had upheld the Foreign Minister

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against the critics of his pan-European program. Perhaps Parliament's ancient fear of the strong man, or the rumored personal animosity entertained toward him by many individual senators and deputies, was responsible for his defeat, to which the support of him by the Socialists also contributed. Yet, whatever its motive, the Parliament has by its vote undeniably hurt Briand's prestige. The extravagant but ill-timed tribute paid him a day or two later at Geneva by Foreign Minister Henderson cannot disguise this fact.

It is to be hoped that Briand will carry on in his present position, and that he will still be able to speak with that convincing authority which has carried him—and France—through many difficult situations in the past decade. He has played an important part in the diplomatic exchanges and maneuvers connected with the coming disarmament conference, the naval and other questions between France and Italy, the task of effecting a genuine reconciliation between France and Germany, the Austro-German customs union, the plan for a United States of Europe. Some of these depend upon his finesse for their success—the reference of the Austro-German customs union to the Council of the League and to The Hague is largely his work. It would be highly regrettable if France, growing more menacingly nationalistic with the passing of each year, should no longer heed the counsel of this man who has been so largely instrumental in keeping French chauvinism in check, and who made possible the admirable Locarno agreement. It is no wonder that Europe, and particularly Berlin and Geneva, should receive the news of Briand's defeat with unconcealed consternation. The Berlin press even hastily declared that the action of the French Parliament "must be accepted as a plain renunciation of peace." Among the European diplomats gathered in Geneva the reaction to the news was much the same. We sincerely trust that this is a premature and erroneous judgment. If, however, Europe thus correctly interprets the vote of the French Parliament, the outlook for peace on the Continent is black indeed.

Briand is remaining in office, at least for the time being. Since the vote at Versailles he has proposed to the European Union Commission that an all-European economic treaty be negotiated with a view to solving some of the Continent's major problems. His plan provides for a preferential-tariff system which would facilitate the exchange of surplus farm products from Central and Eastern Europe for the industrial products of Western Europe, the natural flow of which is now impeded by rigid tariff walls. Financial assistance would also be extended to needy European countries through some central credit system, such as the World Bank at Basel or a committee of the League of Nations. Special attention in this connection would be paid to Austria, which is now experiencing another very serious financial crisis. Obviously, the new Briand proposal is aimed at the projected Austro-German customs union, but it has the virtue of attempting to meet the issue raised by the Curtius-Schober arrangement by offering a substitute wholly economic in character instead of seeking to destroy that arrangement by means of a political attack. Moreover, the new Briand plan would get more quickly to the heart of Europe's problems than could the more cumbersome and ambitious project for a United States of Europe. It may be that in this proposal Briand has found a formula that will help Europe not only economically, but also politically.

Small Latin, Less Greek

THE decision of Yale University to drop Latin and Greek from the list of subjects required for an undergraduate degree is neither surprising nor a new departure in modern education. It merely points to the trend which university education is taking; it is another step in the direction of education—of the most practical and "worth-while" sort—for everybody. The modern young business man, we are told, who has taken four extra years out of his life to get himself educated desires to study subjects that will be useful to him in the cement business, in the manufacture of washing machines, in personnel management or building subways. Latin and Greek, either by a knowledge of the languages themselves or a complete familiarity with classical culture, are of no more use to him as working tools in the pursuit of any of these occupations than are Sanskrit, the differential calculus, or a good course in röntgenology.

It is idle, therefore, to lament the passing of the classics for the great majority of university students. They are not scholars; they are not even to enter one of the more recondite professions. They are practical men in a practical world, and the less their minds are cluttered with tags of unnecessary information the better off they will be. For the students who are interested in pursuits more purely intellectual, the classics will still be available. They may still learn as much of the languages as they can; they may still delight in the golden age of Pericles, in the grandeur of Aeschylus, in the wit of Horace. That is, they may if they have the good fortune to know a Greek or Latin teacher who is able to impart some of these delights, and if in the preparatory schools there will be those to tell the pupils of the riches these languages contain. For it cannot be denied that a good part of the popular revolt against the classics is due to the ineptitude with which they are taught. For centuries school children have struggled with Caesar's account of his campaign in Gaul without either being able to tell a coherent story of what was happening or being in the least aware that what they read was one of the finest and most stirring reports of a soldier on his military activities that has ever been written. Surely there is something wrong here. Surely Vergil is a finer writer than any high-school student suspects him of being. Surely the "Anabasis" is not the be-all and end-all of young persons desirous of acquiring a little Greek. The acquisition of a language, even one's native tongue, is no doubt a painful process at best. But the poor lads and lasses who have bent in despair over their Greek and Latin have suffered boredom as well, and have had nothing at the end to show for their pains.

It has been said in defense of the Yale action that now the classics will "stand on their own feet." It might have been added that first they must find feet to stand on. There was indeed a glory in Greece and a grandeur in Rome. But this glory and this grandeur have been hidden under a dead weight of Greek and Latin grammar. If we may suppose that some day a method will be found of imparting an agility in the use of these languages, with at the same time a just and unsentimental appreciation of the cultures they represent, there will be rejoicing among a certain small class of university students.

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Making the Country Safe for War

By MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

Washington, May 15

SO we are going to war again. Hardly any other interpretation can be put upon the activities of the War Policies Commission now meeting in Washington. Dozens of expert witnesses—industrialists, bankers, army officers, veterans—were heard by this body last March; many others have been heard thus far in the present session. These witnesses, with one or two exceptions, have mentioned peace only in passing, as though world peace were desirable but certainly not to be had, and therefore not worth wasting one's breath in discussing. Instead, the dominant talk has been of war, and of the need of preparing for war. We must be prepared to fight if we would avoid fighting—so has run the time-honored argument of most of the witnesses, although a few, like Daniel Willard, the railroad president, and Newton D. Baker, the former Secretary of War, have spoken bravely of "the next war." Others have used such qualifying phrases as "in the event of war" or "if war comes," but these persons also were certain that we ought to have a comprehensive military and industrial plan to put into operation the moment we were attacked; and some of the latter witnesses were in a hurry to have the thing done as soon as possible. For example, Paul V. McNutt, dean of the Indiana University Law School and former National Commander of the American Legion, urged that the preparedness program be expedited. "I am against waiting," he said, with the air of one who is convinced that war is just around the corner.

It may appear strange that the Congressional mandate under which the War Policies Commission is functioning is entitled "a joint resolution to promote peace and to equalize the burdens and to minimize the profits of war." But the resolution itself says nothing about promoting peace, though it has plenty to say concerning a "study of policies to be pursued in event of war." Hence it is perhaps natural that the commission should have forgotten the title of the resolution. By the same token it is perhaps logical that the commission should have elected to ignore the Kellogg-Briand treaty. In this convention the United States specifically undertook to "condemn war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy." Yet here we have a body of men, created by express will of Congress, at work on the task of fashioning a war policy for the United States. That their mission, if not technically illegal, at least compromises the Kellogg Pact has not even occurred to the war-policy makers. Indeed, they have not seen fit to mention the treaty at all. One witness, Benjamin Marsh, of the People's Lobby, tried it, and he was rewarded in fitting measure for his ignorant belief that the Kellogg Pact means what it says. Secretary of War Hurley, chairman of the commission, was promptly upon him, demanding to know whether Marsh had ever worn an American uniform, whether he was a Socialist, a Bolshevist, or if he thought "the government of the United States was worthy of being maintained and perpetuated."

Few pacifists have ever been as vehement in their advocacy of peace as have the militarists, industrialists, and others in their testimony before the commission. But the peace that they visualize would not be based upon mutual self-trust and understanding; rather would it have its foundation in a strong military organization and in a war policy that would, in the words of Bernard M. Baruch, head of the War Industries Board of 1918, "increase the respect of the people of the world" for the United States. National Commander Ralph T. O'Neil said the American Legion favored a universal-draft law because with such a law "there will be no people in this country who can profit because we went into the war, there will be no one in this country who will seek to draw this country into war in order that he may personally profit thereby. This is primarily a peace measure. On the other hand, no nation in the world would care to lock horns with America if it were known ahead of time that America, if forced into war, would go into it with every dollar, with every machine, and with every man, woman, and child." Then he added, perhaps as an afterthought, that "the American Legion is not a militaristic organization. It is a militant peace organization and is truly working for the peace of the world." General Douglas MacArthur, Chief of Staff, frankly held "to the belief, so often reiterated by our first President, that a reasonable preparation for defense is one of the best guaranties of peace." Brigadier General John Ross Delafield carried this point a step farther when he contended that "two unarmed men much more easily come to blows than two armed men; one armed man may do just as much harm as the other, but the mere fact that the other is armed prevents their coming to blows and making a conflict and it goes far to prevent stealing, plundering, and trespassing." Therefore, our plan to create an elaborate defense machine "can never make us a military bully; on the other hand, it is a plan, if we actually live up to it, which will cause all nations to respect us and give us that protection which military strength always gives to the nation or to the man."

Up to this writing—the hearings are not yet ended—all witnesses except Mr. Marsh have agreed that we must have a war-mobilization plan, and a war policy of some sort that would take the profit out of war and thereby make it less attractive. Beyond that their agreement has not extended. The veterans have insisted, to quote a resolution of the Veterans of Foreign Wars read at the hearings, that a policy be adopted embracing a "universal draft both of man power and of industry in all future wars in which this country may be engaged." The American Legion representative urged "the mobilization of men, money, materials, and food." Several plans were presented under which the government would take over everything in the country at the outbreak of war and the President would automatically be clothed with absolute dictatorial powers. Unfortunately for this dream of a "profitless" war, the American Federation of Labor had been active before the War Policies Commission was organized. Through its political influence it had caused to be inserted in the Congressional resolution setting up the

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commission a proviso that "said commission shall not consider and shall not report upon the conscription of labor." Organized labor, speaking through Arthur J. Lovell, vice-president of the Brotherhood of Enginemen and Firemen, did not seek to conceal its purpose in opposing the conscription of labor. According to Mr. Lovell, the projected universal-draft legislation was designed to "conscript capital as well as labor." Were it possible to do this, he continued, "we would have been for such legislation; but we did not believe that could be done, having regard to the Constitution of the United States, which provides, among other things, that property may not be taken without due process of law."

Representatives of property and capital felt very much the same way. Newton D. Baker answered in the affirmative when Senator Swanson of Virginia, a member of the commission, asked him: "Do not you think it would dislocate all business to have all of the property of the United States, the laboring man's home and everything else, put in a general pot, like the Soviet Government is endeavoring to do now? Would you not have a cessation of business, and a great cessation of business?" For the sake of the record, it may be noted that none of the proponents of the universal-draft legislation has suggested that the government take over "the laboring man's home." By discreet questioning Secretary Hurley brought from Bernard Baruch the statement that in the World War the government had all the power it needed to commandeer property and fix prices, and in that way make war unprofitable. Testimony of like character was presented by other witnesses, all quite obviously with a view to preserving the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution. The industrialists and financiers were quite obviously willing to lend their property to the government upon reasonable terms in the event of war, but they were most emphatically not willing to surrender it as the soldier must surrender his body, that is, unconditionally, which they probably would be forced to do were the Fifth Amendment to be modified or repealed. So long as the due-process clause of this amendment remains valid the government cannot take their property, even in time of war, without "just compensation."

Hence it appears that no plan will be worked out looking toward the conscription of either capital or labor. This leaves only the potential soldier to be drafted. But he really has nothing to worry about. Organized labor, in the plan eventually adopted, will be guaranteed a fair rate of wages; at least it will be assured that there will be no reduction in wages. Industry and commerce will be guaranteed a fair and perhaps fixed level of prices; virtually all the tentative plans submitted provide for a price-fixing scheme of one kind or another, the prices to be determined by representatives of industry and commerce. The soldier will be guaranteed a full share of glory for his readiness to risk death for his country. He should ask no more, in the opinion of former Legion Commander McNutt, who contended that "military service is one of the obligations that rest upon every able-bodied man in this country. That is one of the prices he pays for the benefits of his citizenship." With this in mind the War Department is going ahead with its general mobilization plan, which, according to General MacArthur, calls for the mobilization or conscription of 4,000,000 men at the outbreak of war.

There is every likelihood that the War Policies Commission will recommend legislation legalizing the War Department's mobilization plan. It will also put on paper some sort of skeleton organization to be charged with the supervision of the country's industries, commerce, transportation, and agriculture in time of war, though it will, of course, stop short of recommending that this organization or the government itself be empowered to conscript or confiscate property and capital. It may further suggest that final and complete authority be placed in the hands of the President, which would be done in any event. One question that the commission will probably sidestep, however, is that involving the administration of the emergency war organization. Shall the army control this organization and through it the economic activity of the country, or shall the emergency organization control the army? Shall we have a military or an industrial dictatorship in time of war? That the War Department is working toward the former goal was brought out by Representative Collins, the only anti-militarist member of the commission. He showed that the department has already commissioned 14,000 industrialists in the reserve officers' corps, men who will form part of the military machine and who will submit to military orders if war should come. Secretary Hurley sought to deny that the department had any such purpose in mind, but Representative McSwain of South Carolina, another member of the commission, inconveniently recalled a speech by the commandant of the Army War College wherein the scheme for military domination of the country in time of war was explained and warmly defended. Bernard Baruch, Newton Baker, and others testified that they would oppose a military dictatorship, preferring instead civilian boards with the President as dictator.

Despite all the war talk heard at the meetings of the commission, not one of the witnesses or members as much as even suggested that we were threatened with war from any quarter. The potential enemy, from whom our preparedness is to protect us, simply went unnamed, although General Delafield hinted that what he called the "fanaticism" of Russia might lead to war there. Newton Baker guarded the secret with his usual caution; he called the enemy "Nation A," explaining that "we won't name anyone for politeness' sake." Richard H. Aishton, president of the American Railway Association, at one place in his testimony referred to a hypothetical "war with Canada," but he used this merely as an example to emphasize a point he wished to make. Otherwise there was nothing in the statements of the witnesses or in the questions of the members of the commission to indicate that there was any logical or pressing necessity for adopting a comprehensive war program at this time.

There is another side to the question of war and peace, but either by accident or design only one or two representatives of peace societies or similar organizations have so far been heard by the commission. These organizations were not invited to be represented, but upon request arrangements were made to hear them during the last week of the hearings. On May 14, however, and without notice, the commission decided to terminate its sessions a week earlier than originally planned. The peace organizations have been informed that their representatives must appear before May 22 if they would be heard. Very few of them are in a position to take advantage of this new arrangement. The commission will probably close its hearings after having listened almost exclusively to the stock arguments of those who think of peace in terms of war.

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I Work for Russia

III. The Worker at Work*

By WALTER ARNOLD RUKEYSER

IN my two previous articles I have discussed the structure and departmental functioning of the Soviet state trust. I now turn to the worker—how he works and lives. The misconceptions which apparently exist here in America concerning the everyday life of the Russian worker were nothing short of appalling to me upon my return to this country. Such misconceptions exist even among intelligent professional and business men who read intensively upon the subject. The reason lies perhaps in the fact that so much of what is written about Russia today attempts to generalize rather than to describe particular conditions, and that it is tinged with the personal bias of the writer or the policy bias of the publication, as the case may be.

Everything in life is comparative. To understand conditions among Russian workers today we really should have as a background for comparison a knowledge of the conditions existing under the old regime. I am frank to say that I have absolutely no first-hand knowledge or experience of Russia prior to the year 1929; but since my connection with the Soviets I have made an earnest attempt to study, through carefully selected reading, the life of the worker in the last days of the Czars. Information obtained by reading has been supplemented by contacts with people who really knew industrial conditions in the country prior to 1917. In setting down here what they have told me I make no pretense to be presenting anything general or typical or even accurate. I can, however, vouch for the accuracy of my own observations as to the condition of the workers at Asbest both before and after 1929.

I have seen the workers' former quarters in the large industrial centers in Moscow and Leningrad. These were characterized by the filth, squalor, and unsanitary conditions which we in this country always associate with the worst of our industrial centers as they existed toward the close of the last century. I have had pointed out to me in Leningrad, by an engineer who has been connected with Russian industry for over thirty years, houses in which more than twenty workers of both sexes and of all ages existed in a single room having less than 300 square feet of floor space. The windows were incapable of being opened. As fast as one bed (?) became free, as its occupant went on shift, the next occupant was waiting to use it. The shifts seldom consisted of less than ten hours' work—usually eleven, twelve, or fourteen. The ten-to-eleven-hour shift, I may say in passing, still exists in the asbestos mines in the Canadian province of Quebec, where I have had personal experience. The average wage of the Russian worker was pitiably low, as may be proved by reference to official reports of the period. One bourgeois engineer in Moscow, a non-party man, told me that in the factory at which he was employed before the war the body of a living woman was hoisted up and down through a chimney flue for the purpose of cleaning it! This anecdote strains all credulity; I state it for whatever it is worth.

At Asbest, upon my first arrival there in 1929, I saw the workers living for the greater part under the conditions that existed when the mines were under private ownership. Most of them were quartered in large log houses consisting usually of one huge room, either unpartitioned or divided by flimsy curtains. An entire family—man, wife, and children—would have a space possibly six feet by twelve in which to live, sleep, and cook. The beds were composed of boards covered by a heap of rags. The workers seldom if ever undressed. There was no attempt at providing latrines or other like facilities. Some families which we observed were living in a sort of earth hovel; others in huts half of which were hardly more than excavations in the ground, rudely roofed over. Today these shelters, where they have not been entirely removed, are being used for cattle.

In 1929 the trust embarked upon an ambitious program to provide new housing in the form of communal apartments and individual houses to take care of between 13,000 and 15,000 workers and their families—probably some 40,000 persons in all. A new town site was planned and laid out at some distance from the mines and to the windward of any dust arising from the milling operations. This town site borders an almost circular lake approximately five-eighths of a mile in diameter, the town being laid out around three-quarters of this body of water in radiating streets lined by blocks of one-, two-, four-, and eight-family houses. In the next article, describing the daily life of the worker, I shall go into these matters more fully.

Let us turn now to the work itself. The shifts have been shortened so that the worker in the open-cut mines or on the surface puts in a seven-hour day, of which one hour is allowed him for dinner and rest. This makes six working hours net. The underground miner has a gross shift of six hours, as does also the mill worker. The working "week" consists of four days, the fifth day being free. In some industries I understand that there may soon be installed a "week" of three working days, with the shift lengthened by half an hour.

The office and technical workers formerly worked from eight in the morning till three in the afternoon with a half-hour's recess at eleven o'clock. The hours were changed last fall to extend from nine till four. In Moscow the offices are usually open from nine or nine-thirty till five.

The average wage for a worker at Asbest closely approximates 100 rubles a month. For his quarters he is charged a very small rental, which is on a sliding scale depending upon his earnings. Thus a man earning 100 rubles a month may pay 5 for a certain apartment; whereas a man earning 200 rubles would pay possibly 10 or 12 for the same quarters. This is more commonly true in the cities than in the newly developed industrial centers, for in the latter the type of quarters furnished varies according to

* The third of a series of six articles. The fourth, on the Worker at Home and at Play, will appear in the issue of June 3.—Editor The Nation.

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the class of work done. A mine worker, for example, will live in a multiple-family house, whereas an engineer, who may earn up to 800 or 1,000 rubles a month, will have a single or two-family bungalow. The layout of the two-family houses resembles that of similar dwellings here in America. The houses are all lighted with electricity, for which a purely nominal charge is made; all have bathrooms and kitchens and outbuildings for live stock; all are surrounded by ample ground for gardens. Water and sewerage systems are being installed as rapidly as possible. Pure drinking water is now furnished from the underground workings, and the purity of that supply is constantly tested and maintained.

The number of square meters of floor space per person, as well as a constantly rising wage scale, is predetermined for each period of the Five-Year Plan; the percentage of accomplishment of the housing and wage program accompanies all figures on production and costs in the progress reports. In addition to his actual wages and his low-rent advantages, the worker receives a host of other indirect benefits. These consist partly in insurance, pensions, vacations—a month each year on pay at some resort, with all expenses paid—and free medical and hospital services. Primary and secondary educational facilities are provided, and every incentive is offered to workers as a preferred class to attend institutions of higher learning. Women about to become mothers get full clinical attention and are granted six weeks' leave on pay before and after confinement. Workers' clubs offer inexpensive entertainment and cultural facilities. Lastly, commodities such as foodstuffs are provided, as available, at the state cooperative stores at prices in keeping with earning power.

The workers, in general, belong to their respective trade unions, which make contracts with the trust setting forth the conditions of work. These contracts must be strictly adhered to by the trust. The unions also concern themselves with the safety of actual operations as well as with living and other social conditions. The safety of the men at work is guarded by inspectors, and no mining methods may be installed without their approval. This situation is completely analogous to conditions here in America.

Since our arrival at Asbest the mining and milling plants, old and new, have been equipped with safety devices and sanitary and hygienic facilities such as are found in this country. At the shaft heads are excellent "change-houses" following the best American design, wherein the men *must* shower, hanging their working clothes in specially provided drying-rooms. Cafeterias are rapidly being installed in all plants.

In designing new plants or layouts the American consultant has impressed upon him at every turn that the safety and health of the worker are of primary importance. The plants must be so designed as to give a prescribed minimum of light and air. The machines must be so spaced in any layout that no crowding will result, a minimum of one meter being requisite between machines. All moving parts must be covered over, all dust creators must be equipped with aspirators, and so on. The reader can see that to accomplish all this takes time. It is not done in a day. But when I compare conditions as I found them in 1929 with those existing today, the improvement is impressive.

The workers are paid fortnightly, as is the usual practice in similar work in this country. They are paid in cash. If the bank for any reason should not be able to supply the cash on time, as was sometimes the case during the money-hoarding period last year, the workers are supplied partly with cash, partly with company scrip and credit cards. The inability to pay in cash, which was merely temporary, resulted in a severe manifesto from Moscow that if all workers were not paid promptly, the executives of the trusts, whether party or non-party men, would be held strictly accountable. Shortly thereafter the condition was alleviated.

I mention such incidents to point out some of the enormous difficulties encountered by the men at the helm of the plan. Yet it seems to me that as these unforeseen difficulties arise they are being faced and overcome. It is true that at times one hears a muttered growl from the Russian bear, that one sees a tendency among a small minority toward passive resistance; but in my observation the master-minds in this great experiment have their finger so closely on the pulse of the people, they know so well the psychology with which they have to deal—so many of them being of the people—that they are able to cope successfully with these emergencies as they arise. The advantage of a dictatorship is its capacity for quick action. When prohibition was tried in Russia, for example, and found to be a failure, immediately, without lost motion or political bickering, prohibition was discarded and governmental control of manufacture and sale instituted. At the same time an intensive educational campaign against drinking was inaugurated. The same quickness of action was evidenced last spring when the peasants showed signs of passively resisting further collectivization of their live stock. It is in this way that the fearful tempo of industrialization and mechanization is maintained at just that top speed which will not break down the people's morale—and no faster.

It has been my experience that the Russian worker can be trained to a job as well as any other person of similar mentality. To be sure, the word *nichevo* is heard often, too often; but, after all, the corresponding expression, "What the hell," is to be heard everywhere by those who are actively in charge of labor. Contrary to the common supposition in this country, the present system in Russia does not completely dull initiative. A higher wage scale, with attendant increase of "power" and better living conditions, is always a lure for the ambitious individual there as elsewhere, but with modifications. To be sure, the system is designed to raise the *minimum* standards; and those who are satisfied with the minimum will have no incentive to improve their work. Recently piece-work and bonuses, though taboo as capitalistic devices, have been reinstated—another surrender to the requirements of the speeded-up tempo of the plan. Further, I have found the Russian worker to be at his best when assigned to a piece of work alone. The entire responsibility is then his. He cannot "pass the buck." Everyone can see the results for which he and he alone is responsible. Put twenty workmen on a job, and I grant that Russian love of sociability—the desire to talk, to sing, to smoke—will militate against maximum efficiency. To change the temperament of an entire people in a short period of time is necessarily extremely difficult if not impossible. But it seems to me that in many respects they are accomplishing the impossible in Russia today. The adoption of American methods, the frequent use of such words as *Amerikansky tempo*

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and *fordismus,* which have become bywords throughout Russia, show that the psychology of a people can be changed. Personally, I found the Russians, all of them, eager and quick to learn, eternally asking about how things are done in America, and apparently "on their toes" to show us foreigners that they can emulate their American brothers in efficiency and ability to learn. I leave the problem for debate by the respective exponents of the theories of heredity and environment.

In the next of these articles I shall discuss the daily life of the worker—how he eats, travels, and amuses himself —the human side of this remarkable experiment.

"Married Love" and Censorship

By MARY WARE DENNETT

THE arresting words—"700,000 sold in England"—recently appeared in a bookshop window which was entirely filled with copies of Dr. Marie Stopes's "Married Love." The books made a striking background for quotations from the decision of Judge John M. Woolsey by which this famous book became a legally permissible publication in the United States, after thirteen years of exile as "obscene and immoral." April 6, 1931, will stand as a very significant date in the long history of the struggle to throw off the shackles of sex censorship. Judge Woolsey's decision has established another precedent by which the absurd obscenity statutes of this country may be slowly but surely broken down.

If we who are living now could come back to this earth a hundred years hence we should probably view with amused incredulity the records of the preposterous doings of our century in the field of censorship. Without official proof no one would believe, for instance, that in two branches of Anglo-Saxon civilization, similar in language, traditions, and experience, could be found such a contrast as that between England's acclaim of "Married Love" as an epoch-making contribution to sex education—a book full of scientific truth, practical instruction, beauty, ideality—and the attitude of the United States, for thirteen years supine under the ruling of a few officials whose unclean concepts of sex made them declare this same book "obscene and immoral" and bar it from importation and the mails. In England "Married Love" has been published in nineteen editions by one of the oldest, most respectable, and most honorable firms; in the United States that same firm—G. P. Putnam Sons—would, until now, have been held criminal if its New York office had issued an American edition of this book.

But so it has always been during the whole history of the effort to capture that dangerous animal called obscenity and keep it behind the bars of statutes and official dictums. No one has ever yet caught the beast itself, though many suspected creatures have been trapped in its stead, only to be released when cases of mistaken identity have been established. It will always be an elusive, unidentifiable creature, until we realize that there "ain't no such animal" anyhow, but only an infected state of mind. Some people are susceptible to this infection, others are not. However, immunity is growing fast in these encouraging days. Psychological sunlight is doing an immense amount of purifying, and many dark corners in mental and emotional closets are being cleaned out. A reflex of this educational reformation is found in the recent succession of court decisions culminating in the "Married Love" case. From the bench and even from juries some fine clean decisions have come of late. While in them all there has been the usual necessary dependence upon legal precedent, there has also been a noticeable new note of independence, based upon recognition of the fact that obscenity is in the mind, not in any particular words; and that the government has no moral right to bar books from the people in general just because certain minds are capable of seeing dirt in them.

Judge Woolsey's decision in the "Married Love" case, by which he dismissed the libel as not presenting sufficient ground for submission to a jury, is a striking document. He quotes the dictionary definitions of "obscene" and "immoral," and then states unqualifiedly: "The book 'Married Love' does not in my opinion fall within these definitions in any respect." He quotes "The Sex Side of Life" case as precedent, and then goes on to say:

> "Married Love" is a considered attempt to explain to married people how their mutual sex life may be made happier. To one who has read Havelock Ellis, as I have, the subject matter of Dr. Stopes's book is not wholly new, but it emphasizes the woman's side of sex questions. It makes also some apparently justified criticisms of the inopportune exercise by the man, in the marriage relation, of what are often referred to as his conjugal or marital rights, and it pleads with seriousness, and not without eloquence, for a better understanding by husbands of the physical and emotional side of the sex life of their wives.
>
> I do not find anything exceptionable anywhere in the book, and I cannot imagine a normal mind to which this book would seem to be obscene or immoral within the proper definition of those words. . . .

Another recent court victory for decency and common sense is the decision in favor of "The Sexual Life in Its Biological Significance," by Dr. Joannes Rutgers of Holland, printed by a Viennese publisher after the author's death. One hundred and twenty copies of the book were imported by C. E. Midgard of Seattle and held by the customs officials as "indecent" and "obscene." The case was taken to the federal court as the first test of the new law, initiated by Senator Bronson Cutting, providing that no customs official could single-handed ban a book, as had previously been the case, but that any question as to importability should be settled by the federal courts. Mr. Midgard protested the forfeiture decision of the customs officials, and his case was backed by the American Civil Liberties Union and by Dr. G. Shearman Peterkin of Seattle. As in the "Married Love" case and "The Sex Side of Life" case, there was not the slightest reasonable excuse for the suppression of the book. No atmosphere of obscenity was anywhere to be found, either in the book itself or in the mind of the author, publisher, or importer. Dr. Rutgers was a distin-

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guished physician in Holland. He was one of the pioneer leaders of the birth-control movement and an internationally known authority on contraception. His book was the result of a lifetime of scientific observation and loving service to mankind. The publisher put out the book in the sober form suitable to its serious contents. Mr. Midgard, who imported it, is a man of obvious ideality in his social interests and educational activities.

Judge George M. Bourquin in his charge to the jury insisted that the book must be judged as a whole and not by any isolated passages apart from the context. He said: "I can see no reason why an intelligent person who should read it should not note the serious intent of its author." Mr. Midgard writes that the judge's charge should be "printed word for word and published throughout the country." Here again we see judicial insistence upon two important factors in the reformation of legal precedent—namely, appraising a publication by its whole atmosphere and intent rather than by excerpts capable of salacious interpretation by obscene minds, and deciding upon the admissibility of a publication on the basis of the intelligence of normal rather than subnormal or abnormal readers.

The criterion in many if not most obscenity cases until recent years was not one of quality of idea but of "how far" the publication went. Anything that went "too far" was suppressible. By "too far" was meant a description of sex functioning; sex physiology was considered tolerable if it was not too explicit, but sex functioning was beyond the pale. It was at just that point that the fear and shame ingrained in our false traditions stepped in, revealing the miserable old concept that sex itself is dirty. It is surely reason for encouragement that the opposition to this old concept, which is more and more being developed among intelligent people, should begin to make itself felt in our courts. What made Dr. Stopes's "Married Love" an epoch-making publication years ago was chiefly the fact that it discussed sex functioning and sex emotion with the same clarity and scientific spirit as sex physiology, and with precisely the same purpose, that is, the greater knowledge and happiness of human beings; and it is that very same thing which makes the book a practical help to blundering, troubled people today.

In this connection one of the most significant of recent legal decisions is one about which there has been no noticeable publicity. The little book "The Sex Factor in Marriage," by Helena Wright, M.B., B.S., an English publication, was held up by the customs officials as "obscene." It has a notably fine introduction by the Reverend A. Herbert Gray, and it discusses in simple, direct, well-chosen language the technique of the art of sex relationship. The official action was protested by Morris Ernst, the attorney who has won so many of these recent victories in obscenity cases; and the decision was reversed without court action on the strength of the precedents established by the other cases. So now the old notion that publications which describe sex union are for that reason indecent and obscene seems, for the present at least, effectively checked. This constitutes a great step ahead, but it is one which must be vigilantly safeguarded, for progress in this field is by no means steadily onward. Periods of revision and reaction seem inevitable.

Excellent as all these decisions are, they are not enough either in number or nature to satisfy the rightful demands for common sense in law and stabilized security for decency and freedom. They do establish precedent, which is all to the good so far as it goes, but there is also a vast amount of contradictory precedent on the court records, and judges and juries can be influenced by the bad precedents if they so choose. An individual writer, publisher, bookseller, or importer must still take the gamble that any book dealing seriously with sex may be made the target for preposterous prosecution, if some complainant or official wants to induce it. Many individuals or firms, when faced with these prosecutions, either cannot or will not fight them out. Questions of expense, inconvenience, or distasteful publicity often make the payment of a fine the easiest or the only practicable way out. And so the supply of bad precedents is kept up, not because those concerned want it to be so, but because of the often overwhelming difficulty in shouldering a legal struggle.

Even when a case is won, the victor is still the victim of a governmental injustice for which there is no redress. Neither Dr. Stopes nor her publisher can recover the losses of the thirteen years during which her book was barred from this country. And on top of that loss comes the necessity of paying the legal costs of getting the ban removed. The pamphlet "The Sex Side of Life" was under ban for eight years, and the court case dragged along for a year and a half, requiring thirteen separate appearances of the author in court, which meant the interruption of all other work during that period. But one cannot sue the government for loss of business, time, health, and strength, or for the nervous strain of a false accusation and unwanted notoriety. Nor can the public be recompensed for being deprived of a suppressed publication.

There is here a cumulative injustice which no mere bettering of precedent is alone sufficient to correct. Various minor or temporary remedial measures have been suggested, such as that requiring the Post Office to go to court when it bans a publication from the mails, just as must any individual citizen when he brings action against another; and that requiring customs officials to p[illegible] all publications which are barred from importation, so that the public may be informed and so that cases may be discovered and defended by group action when defense is too heavy a burden for the individual concerned.

These are good suggestions, but they are not basic. The real trouble lies in the nature of the obscenity statutes. Obscenity has never been specifically defined by law. It can be anything which a given judge or jury or prosecutor chooses to make it. It varies ridiculously from time to time and from place to place. The very same book is legally obscene one day and pure the next. There can be no real dependence on court decisions when the crime is undefined. Moreover, there is no use trying to define it or to frame laws which penalize it, for obscenity is a feeling, an attitude of mind, not words or acts. No laws can make a feeling or an attitude of mind a crime. In the course of time it will become clear to all normal citizens that the dirt-seeing faculty can be educated but not legislated out of people. As that discovery is made by larger and larger sections of the public, the demand will grow for dumping the obscenity laws into the legal scrap-basket as just so much useless clutter. And along with that demand will come an increased sense of responsibility for the type of education that will gradually eliminate the obscene mind from the world.

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The Wheat Chaos—Pool or Ruin?

By BARROW LYONS

THE inconsistency of official America in crying out against European "dumping," and then announcing that the Federal Farm Board would sell its huge accumulation of more than 200,000,000 bushels of wheat in European markets as rapidly as it could, has caused many bitter smiles in Russia and Germany. But our European customers have done no laughing hitherto compared to what they are doing now when the United States stands in the very uncomfortable position of facing squarely the international situation, as it does at the London conference convened on May 18 to endeavor to reach a world marketing agreement that will control the movement and price of wheat in international trade.

Unless the Farm Board delegation, headed by Samuel R. McKelvie, is prepared to enter a trade agreement with the Soviets and other great wheat-exporting nations, it will stand definitely accused of being willing to ruin not only the farmers of the United States, but of the world, and of thereby doing its utmost to perpetuate the world-wide economic depression. For unless constructive action is taken immediately to raise the price of wheat, the growers of the largest land crop will face utter ruin.

There are three courses the Farm Board might pursue. It could lock up its wheat holdings, as some of the Western Senators have demanded, but it has refused to accept this suggestion and has decided to unload as rapidly as it can. It could sell in an open market in competition with the huge carry-over stores of the Argentine, Canada, and Australia and with the splendid crops that in a few months will be ready to flood world markets with even more unwanted grain; but to do that would inevitably depress prices still further. Finally, the Farm Board could cooperate with the rest of the world on the problem of wheat.

Laying aside political considerations, clearly the only economically sound course is to make a sincere and intelligent effort to bring about an international agreement which will tend to control the movement of grain to the principal markets and eventually regulate production and prices. All the other great wheat-exporting countries are ready for some degree of cooperation. If the United States remains aloof at this point, its attitude can be interpreted only as a challenge to economic combat on an enormous scale.

Whichever way the Farm Board acts, however, it must inevitably give satisfaction of a sort to the Communists, and therein lies the greatest political difficulty. Nothing could afford the Soviets greater mirth than a surrender by capitalism on a major issue of this sort. On the other hand, if the United States wishes to remain in "splendid isolation" and bid its wheat against the surpluses of the rest of the world, it will be aiding the Communists politically more than it could in any other way, for in bringing widespread suffering to wheat farmers everywhere it would be perpetuating and intensifying the conditions upon which revolution thrives most readily.

A few figures make the picture clearer. In Kansas farmers are receiving 48 cents a bushel for wheat on the farm. In some parts of western Canada the farm price is 36 cents a bushel. In the United States the very large farms employing modern machinery grew this wheat for around 60 cents a bushel, according to a conservative estimate. On many farms it cost more than $1 a bushel. The world carry-over of exportable wheat is close to a billion bushels. The Canadian Bureau of Statistics estimated that at the end of February the carry-over in four countries alone amounted to 819,000,000 bushels—325,000,000 bushels in the United States, 232,000,000 bushels in Canada, 141,000,000 bushels in Argentina, and 126,000,000 bushels in Australia. Russia also is known to have a carry-over from the last crop, but the quantity is not known. And now a new crop is piling up additional stores of unconsumable grain. Australia has just harvested a record crop, and has some 140,000,000 exportable bushels to add to the carry-over. Reports from the Argentine indicate a total crop of some 271,404,000 bushels, an increase over last year's harvest of 66 per cent. Reports of the United States Department of Agriculture indicate an exportable surplus from the 1931 crop in this country of some 133,000,000 bushels. Reports from Canada also indicate a large exportable surplus to be added to existing supplies. Russia exported some 90,000,000 bushels of her last crop, but the progress of the Five-Year Plan will permit her to export between 150,000,000 and 250,000,000 bushels from the coming crop, unless weather conditions are unusually severe.

Fortunately for the wheat farmers of the rest of the world, the foreign-trade policy of Russia is being conducted on strictly economic lines. In order to meet obligations incurred for the importation of machinery and technical assistance, Russia is anxious to obtain the best possible prices for what she ships abroad. In fact, the depression of world prices has made it necessary for the Soviets greatly to increase their export program and to stint home consumers more than was anticipated; so there is no question about Russia's willingness to enter a world marketing agreement that would improve the price of grain.

Russia's need has not been overlooked by the foes of communism in this country, and it is reasonable to suppose that they have brought pressure upon federal authorities not to enter into a marketing agreement that would enhance greatly the economic position of the Soviets. Grain dealers, moreover, have seen their business gradually drying up through the organization of farmers' pools, and it cannot be even remotely imagined that they will favor what amounts to a world wheat pool. From "responsible" quarters an international embargo against Russian grain has been suggested.

In spite of the Tory element in Great Britain which would sacrifice almost anyone for the obstruction of Russian progress, the U. S. S. R. has powerful friends in England. Last year when the grain agents of the Soviets found it almost impossible to get commercial credits from other banks, the bank of the Cooperative Wholesale Society put large funds at the disposal of the Russians, and enabled them to move wheat into the United Kingdom, by far the largest

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wheat-importing country. During the 1929-30 crop year Great Britain took from all sources 206,100,000 bushels of wheat. The Russian strength in this market is further disclosed by more recent figures. During the first quarter of 1931 the imports of Russian wheat into Great Britain amounted to 5,788,974 hundredweight, valued at $7,320,000, while in the first quarter last year Britain took only 321,912 hundredweight of Russian wheat, valued at $778,500. The change is reflected in the decline of United States wheat imports into England, which in the first three months of last year totaled $10,833,930 in value, but this year slumped to $2,192,185. Less of the cheap Argentine wheat also was imported.

Last year Germany was the second-largest wheat-importing country, having bought abroad 47,500,000 bushels, despite a high tariff to protect home agriculture; but there is little likelihood of a serious barrier being put up in Germany against Russian wheat at present. The Soviets recently have placed orders for $75,000,000 worth of goods in Germany on long-term credits, which they will be forced to take up largely through the exportation of raw materials. Wheat stocks in Germany are now at a low ebb. On March 15 they were 350,000 metric tons less than at the same time last year. With Russia anxious to market cheaply some of the best grain in the world, the logic of the situation calls for substantial wheat exports into Germany from the Ukraine.

Belgium was the next largest importer of Russian wheat, and there the government has just been forced to lift an embargo against the Soviet grain. There were special reasons for this. Fifty-one years ago Eduarde Anseele began the establishment of cooperative bakeries in Belgium under the auspices of the Socialist Party. These bakeries formed the basis for a strong consumers' cooperative movement, and as a result in Belgium today bread is selling at half the price it commands in France. The cooperative bakeries want cheap wheat from the Russian cooperative commonwealth, and they wield a powerful political influence.

Italy followed Belgium as a wheat-importing country in the 1929-30 season, with imports of 42,000,000 bushels. Opposed as he is to communism, Mussolini has his reasons for favoring the importation of cheap Russian wheat. While he is protecting Italian agriculture with a high tariff and urging Italians to plant more wheat, he is at the same time building battleships with the import duties he has levied upon Russian grain. The cheaper the grain, the higher the duty can be—and the more battleships for Mussolini.

If anyone is inclined to doubt the force with which Russia is able to inject her products into world markets, let him examine the cases of Austria and Poland. Austria recently placed an embargo upon Russian eggs and poultry. By threatening to cancel $1,500,000 worth of orders placed with Austrian machinery manufacturers, the Soviets quickly compelled a lifting of the embargo. Last summer the Russian grain agent purchased a seat on the Vienna exchange and startled Central Europe by offering Russian wheat at 5 per cent less than any competitor. In some cases Danubian grain, which was by no means the dearest on the market, was being offered at 25 cents a bushel more than Russian.

Still more amazing than this is the development in the trade relations between Poland and Russia. Walter Duranty, Moscow correspondent for the New York *Times*, reports that a delegation of Polish industrial magnates is visiting Moscow on business bent. They want orders for about $20,000,000 worth of Polish goods. This seems utterly astounding in view of the bitter political animosities that have existed between Poland and Russia, and indicates, Mr. Duranty says, that "trade is sometimes thicker than blood."

Nothing illustrates Duranty's aphorism more clearly than the Canadian attitude. Presiding over the London conference will be George Howard Ferguson, avowed foe of the Soviet system. Canada has set its face against Russia more sternly than almost any other country. Last February the government passed an order-in-council prohibiting the importation into Canada from the Soviet Union of coal, pulpwood and lumber, asbestos, and furs. The order based its objections to these products on the fact that the Russian standard of living was below anything conceived of in Canada.

> Broadly speaking [this order asserted], all employment [in Russia] is in control of the Communist Government, which regulates all conditions of work and seeks to impose its will upon the whole world. This is communism, its creed and its fruits, which we as a country oppose and must refuse to support by interchange of trade.

Russia retaliated with an embargo upon Canadian products; and now Canada above all others, because its economic system depends to so great an extent upon the export of wheat, must come to terms with the Soviets or face agricultural and industrial ruin for years to come. Mr. Ferguson has his orders from Premier Bennett to support an international pool, and do his very best to raise the price of wheat in world markets—which is what the Five-Year Plan requires more than almost any other one thing at present.

It is, of course, the pressure brought upon the government by the radical farmers of western Canada that has changed its attitude. The farmers themselves have put forward a plan for control of world markets suggested by Aaron Sapiro, who organized the Canadian wheat pools and most of those in the United States. The Sapiro plan calls first for organization within the wheat-exporting countries for control of a major portion of the crops, and then for organization of an international pool. The world pool, under this plan, would set up a base line for normal consumption, upon which a primary pool would be organized. Then a secondary pool for the world surplus would be carried over from year to year, with each country bearing its part of the loss. If the countries increased their acreage, the increased delivery would be put into the secondary pool. Arrangements would be made with a central banking group to finance the international pool, provided the pool secured actual, exclusive selling control of what would be equivalent to 75 per cent of the world's surplus, both the carry-over surplus and the exportable surplus from coming crops. This is a big program, which proposes to bring the agricultural population of the world into working agreement on a purely economic basis. It waives political prejudices and convictions, and substitutes a picture of immediate realities. Ultimately world peace will be brought about on some such basis—through economic ties rather than through any general agreement on political policies.

It is extremely questionable, however, whether this will appeal to Washington. If it were not for the failure of American farmers to reduce wheat acreage to any appreciable

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extent, and the enormous carry-over in the hands of the Wheat Stabilization Corporation, it might be possible for the Farm Board to pursue the Administration policy of making the United States a non-exporting country so far as wheat is concerned. But words and gestures do not seem to dispose of that embarrassing carry-over, and a huge exportable surplus is in sight from the coming crop. A high tariff may keep out cheaper Canadian grain, and still cheaper Russian grain, but it will help not at all in bidding against those supplies in foreign markets.

How much pressure financial interests connected with established grain-brokerage houses can exert to prevent an agreement at London is problematical; but one thing seems certain—if the present Washington Administration makes a false step in connection with the London conference by obviously allowing its prejudice against communism to influence its attitude toward the parley, it must face the accusation of failing to represent the interests of American farmers engaged in wheat-growing. It must also risk condemnation as an enemy of farm interests in all parts of the world. It will be less expensive for Mr. Hoover to be slightly inconsistent and come to an agreement with the Russians than for him to obstruct a world marketing agreement under which the Farm Board grain surplus gradually might be disposed of at a fair price. He can afford to do nothing more toward ruining the farmer.

In the Driftway

CHARLIE CHAPLIN is returning home from Europe leaving a trail of laugh-laden legends behind him. It is impressive evidence of his power as an actor, though it must be tiresome personally at times, that to the world he is real only in his stage make-up—as a tramp with a pathetic mustache and humorous big feet. Is it possible that even Chaplin, if he were asked suddenly to describe the image that he has of himself, would find himself involuntarily describing the tramp?

* * * * *

ONE of the first things that happened to Chaplin on his visit to England and the Continent might have been taken from one of his pictures. He was being followed along a London street by a crowd of curious people, one of whom had recognized him and spread the news. With the two friends who accompanied him, Chaplin ducked into a candy shop to avoid the crowd, and shut the door behind him. But the lady proprietor, summoned from a bit of tea in the back of her shop, not recognizing the tramp and seeing him close the door, immediately surmised a hold-up. She rushed to reopen the door, and when "the little man" asked for some candy she wrapped it up in fear and trembling while she awaited the terrible denouement. Here is a situation which in a film could be made to yield both the pathos and the humor for which Chaplin is justly famous. The idea of the tramp as we know him being followed as a celebrity is humorous and pathetic enough. The idea of that same ineffectual, unlucky tramp being mistaken for a hard-boiled hold-up man is even more humorous and even more pathetic.

MOST of the "situations" in which Charlie has figured during his triumphant visit to Europe have had, however, only the barest basis in any actual occurrence. Apparently, so far as it was possible, he has gone about his business even more circumspectly than any other traveler would do, for the very reason that he wished to avoid attention. But his public—and who is not his public?—has used its imagination and made of every Chaplin move a Chaplin movie. This account from the London correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* is typical of the sort of tale Chaplin has given rise to all over Europe.

> . . . This droll has impressed himself so emphatically upon people's minds that they cannot think of him without his "business."
>
> That must be the explanation of the story I heard from a staid man who was dining at Simpson's in the Strand on Monday night. Two men came in and sat near him at a central table, and he paid no attention to them till he noticed that one of them, who was eating stewed eel, had got the eel somehow entangled round his neck. Then he saw it was Charlie. The staff of the place from the other rooms and the cloakroom attendants crowded in to have a glimpse of Charlie carrying on his lonely fight with the eel, and even Simpson's waiters could not help telling the other diners that that was Charlie over there with the eel. But the elderly diners sitting in the old pews only said "Hey?" and "What?" and "Oh, the cinema fellow" and things like that; then "Bring me the Stilton, waiter," or "I'll have Cheddar tonight," and went on with their meal.
>
> It couldn't, of course, have been quite like that, but Charlie was at Simpson's and had stewed eel, and Simpson's at night in the men's dining-room when the old English diners are at work is a quiet place.

* * * * *

ONLY once did the Chaplin tales, as reported in the press, depart from their Chaplinesque quality of wistful inadequacy. This was when Charlie was requested—by royal command—to appear in a charity variety performance in London and refused, sending a check instead. He explained that he had not appeared on the stage in person since he had begun to act in the movies; pressed still further, he declared the invitation had not been from royalty but was merely a "request from a music-hall manager named Black to appear in a charity show"; but when the questioners pushed him once more, he showed bitterness that the little man of the films has never shown in all his adversities. "They say I have a duty to England, but I wonder," he said. "Nobody ever cared for me or wanted me in England seventeen years ago. I had to go to America for my chance and I got it there." One is somehow a little sorry that this bit of chagrin slipped out after seventeen years. It is entirely possible that the Chaplin of the London music halls was an altogether different fellow from the clown that millions of movie-goers love. But even if he were the same, it is out of character for Charlie to complain at the turns of fortune. The Charlie who is thrown out of a restaurant, who waits in vain for guests that never come, who is always and invariably the under-dog wins hearts because he will not be other than gallant. He is as irresistibly gallant as Don Quixote. One would like him to remain so.

THE DRIFTER

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Correspondence

A School for Peace Workers

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: An Institute of International Relations will be held by the American Friends' Service Committee from June 8 to 20, 1931, at Haverford College, Haverford, Pennsylvania. There will be three basic courses offered on the economic, political, and spiritual aspects of the struggle for world peace, under the leadership of Herbert F. Fraser, professor of economics at Swarthmore College; Edward W. Evans, instructor in international law at the University of Pennsylvania; Leyton Richards, pastor of the Carr's Lane Church, Birmingham, England, and Henry J. Cadbury, professor of Biblical literature at Bryn Mawr College. There will also be courses on the technique of creating attitudes of good-will in local groups, on international issues of the day, and on the effects of military training on world peace, under the direction of Tucker Smith, secretary of the Committee on Militarism in Education, and Dr. A. C. Goddard, executive secretary of the World Peace Commission of the Methodist Episcopal church.

Classes will be held in the morning; the afternoons are reserved for recreation and fellowship, and lectures will be given in the evening. Among the evening speakers will be James G. MacDonald, chairman of the Foreign Policy Association; Frederick J. Libby, executive secretary of the National Council for the Prevention of War; Norman Thomas, executive director of the League for Industrial Democracy; William I. Hull, professor of history in Swarthmore College; and Rabbi Fineshriber.

Complete information with regard to rates may be obtained from the American Friends' Service Committee, 20 South Twelfth Street, Philadelphia.

Philadelphia, May 1 Anna L. Curtis

Townley the Crusader

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: A. C. Townley, former head of the Nonpartisan League, is leading a new crusade through the medium of numerous speeches which he is making in farming communities. He begins usually by presenting a picture of present conditions. On the one hand millions are unable to find work to secure wages and buy food; on the other hand is a surplus of farm products which cannot be sold, with the farmer receiving scarcely enough to pay interest and taxes, let alone enough to purchase manufactured goods of which he is in need. Mr. Townley goes back to the time when flour was ground by the miller for one-eighth of the product; that is, out of eight bushels of wheat ground the miller received one bushel and the farmer took home seven. Today that stipulation is almost reversed and the farmer gets the equivalent of about one bushel. The rest goes mostly to the milling interests and in transportation costs. Similarly in regard to machinery. At one time about seven-eighths of the price paid for a binder, say, went for labor costs. Today those workers get around one-eighth with which to buy the farmer's food products. As a result, the purchasing power of the farmer and of labor has been crippled almost beyond repair. The farmer has been able to keep his purchasing power up only by borrowing huge sums of money on his land. Until recently, when things became too bad, he could always move on to cheaper land and again mortgage it. Today he has no more security to offer, and unless there is a readjustment of economic conditions, serious consequences are likely to follow.

Mr. Townley's program consists of two planks. First, let Congress declare a moratorium on the payment of interest for five years. Second, prevent the payment of dividends or interest on watered stocks or bonds. A fair return would be permitted on the actual investment. For this program the financial structure of the country would need to be entirely recast. The government would loan out needed money and charge only necessary operating costs. International finance would also be affected. The immediate benefits would consist in relieving the burden of interest charges not only against the individual but also on all public debts, which would have its effect in reduced taxes. Elimination of the payment of returns on the watered stock of our big corporations would also result in reducing the costs of manufactured products.

Mr. Townley is now holding meetings in North and South Dakota and Minnesota. His program has a great popular appeal to the farmers of the Northwest. Out of a hundred farmers attending a meeting near here, only one was not paying interest in one way or another. Its appeal to the industrial population is more doubtful.

The local papers do not publish any reports of these meetings, but I thought the readers of *The Nation* might be interested in this new movement.

Bijou Hills, S. D., April 15 S. H. Sabin

The Wrong Name

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Would you be so kind as to note that my name is Howard Baker—not Howard Baxter, as Mr. Cantwell has it throughout his review of my novel "Orange Valley" in your issue of April 15. The review is intelligent, and I do not want to reproach Mr. Cantwell. Still, you will realize that such a mistake is very damaging to me.

Paris, April 30 Howard Baker

Contributors to This Issue

Walter Arnold Rukeyser, an authority on the technology of asbestos mining and milling, with extensive practical and executive experience in North America, since 1929 has been consulting engineer having direction of operations of the Russian Asbestos Trust in the Ural Mountains.

Mary Ware Dennett is the author of "The Sex Side of Life."

Barrow Lyons is on the staff of the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Irwin Edman is the author of "The Contemporary and His Soul."

Clifton P. Fadiman is head of the editorial department of Simon and Schuster.

Lorine Pruette is the author of "Women and Leisure: A Study in Social Waste."

Louis Fischer, Moscow correspondent of *The Nation*, is the author of "Why Recognize Russia?"

Morris U. Schappes is an instructor in English at the College of the City of New York.

R. S. Alexander writes for *The Nation* from South Africa.

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Books, Films, Drama

Suddenly in the Desert

By IRWIN EDMAN

Suddenly in the desert rose a thought
Of solitude more anguished and profound
Than any silences the soul is taught
By seas of this companionable ground.
Here is not hermitage, only delight
Of space and peace and undiminished seeing,
Nor any darkness but the gleaming night
Peopled with starry plenitude of being.
But there is a loneliness that cities breed,
A hunger only felt in human places,
The young, though locked in love, have known this need,
Old friends divined it in familiar faces.
I thought thus in the desert, and I cried,
Grateful because the sands were still and wide.

There Is No Road Back

The Road Back. By Erich Maria Remarque. Translated from the German by A. W. Wheen. Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

THOUGH so ticketed, "The Road Back" is not a record of post-war adjustment. It is both more and less than that. Ernst Birkholz, Remarque's mouthpiece, does not genuinely attempt to reconstruct himself in accordance with civilian conventions. Nor do most of his companions. It is too late. The war did not take place in Flanders. It was staged in their blood and bones and there it remains. "That hell of horrors has usurped our hearts." In the trenches a certain civilization was laboriously, agonizingly built up. It was a civilization founded upon the necessity of cooperation in the face of imminent death. It was a culture with its own morals, hierarchy, art, language, history. In four years a soldier became more than a fighting man in a uniform. He became a citizen of Trenchland. He struck roots, roots compact of blood and terror and despair, but roots none the less. That is why Remarque's characters are haunted by a desire to return to the shell holes, to go back to the only native land they know. That is what one of them means when he asks, with simple pathos: "Are we fit now for anything but soldiering?" That is why Albert, when his woman betrays him, shoots to kill—without an *arrière-pensée*. That is why Ernst has nothing to say to the little children intrusted to his care after the war. There is no bridge between these Trenchlanders and the non-Trenchlanders. To "adjust" themselves is to destroy themselves.

But their dilemma is even more terrible than this. Could they merely ignore these strange civilians, they might perhaps hack out some kind of half-life for themselves. But they cannot ignore them because, for the first time in their lives, they understand them. When the war began they were schoolboys. When it ended they were men. They had had a vision, and it was this vision that was to destroy them utterly. In the face of the last extremity of horror, the eternal rationalizer had been at work. Out of blood and muck they had cemented an ideal. "We went through with it," says one of them, "because there was something deeper that held us together, something that only showed up out there, a responsibility perhaps, but at any rate something of which you know nothing and about which there can be no speeches." Call this something foolishness, sentimentality, if you will—but it was something noble snatched from the jaws of baseness. And it is these men who are asked to accept a post-war world—a world of "patriots," profiteers, and paltry souls. The real, the heartrending tragedy of the returned soldier was that he came back a man into a world which consisted mainly of small-hearted children. How "adjust" yourself to something you have outgrown, something you see through? How swallow a civilization which is nothing but one enormous lie?

Upon the rock of that terrible question Remarque's book bases itself. It is a question stated in terms of the most moving and pathetic drama. The book's verity, its indignation are inescapable. One does not read it. One cowers under it. You cannot tell from it whether Remarque is a great writer or, indeed, whether he is a writer at all. The story jets forth like thick blood from a wound. Is it a work of "art"? Perhaps not. One gets no sense from it that Remarque is larger than his book—one criterion by which to judge great writing. But "The Road Back" does not traffic with the conventional critical canons. The reader's judgment is in abeyance because it wishes to be, because it desires passionately to surrender to this cry, this sob of rage and fury which is denominated a novel. What good the subtle by-play of art? Here is a terrible tale to be told, directly, frontally, quickly. And it is told.

Upon finishing this book I said to myself, as millions will soon be saying: "Who can read this and still believe that there can ever be the slightest justification for any war at any time?" It is, of course, a naive query. That is the keystone of the arch of horror—the fact that such books as "All Quiet" and "The Road Back" are read by millions—and nothing happens. There are honest men in Germany raging at Remarque, cursing him for a poltroon—and they are not subsidized either. I noted a German cartoon the other day which showed Remarque quivering terror-stricken on the floor of his library. A gigantic shadowy German soldier looms up above him. "What do you want?" cries Remarque. "What you have stolen from me," is the reply. "My honor." It is an instructive picture. It makes one realize that the Remarques are not fighting merely a malevolent capitalism; they are fighting a human stupidity, a human grossness so deeply ingrained that four years of blood and sweat have made no impression on it. This stupidity, this grossness, is not the peculiar property of the military mind. The military mind is cruel but it knows what war means. It is the civilian mind which is bestial, blind, hopeless. There is an anecdote told about "All Quiet" which is quite transferable to its sequel. A mild and charming old lady was returning her copy to the lending library from which she had borrowed it. The clerk asked her how she had enjoyed it. "Oh, I thought it was just wonderful," replied the old lady, "but isn't it a shame it couldn't have been written by one of our own boys?" Who was ultimately responsible for the war? Messrs. Krupp, Schwab, Zaharoff and Company? Or the little old lady?

So the capitalistic *Times* will devote full-page reviews to "The Road Back," and respectables of all kinds will praise it, and half a million people will read it, and ten years from now, when the Senate solemnly meets to save democracy once more, it will be quite, quite forgotten. And I believe that Remarque knows it. It is that knowledge which thickens his pages with despair and which renders abortive his gallant attempt to end his book on a note of poetic stoicism. "Something will always be there to sustain me, be it merely my own hands, or a tree, or the breathing earth." But that is not enough, not nearly enough. One thing more, at least, is needed if he is to live at all—and that is the knowledge that he is accepted as a

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human being by his fellow human beings. And he is not accepted. Even now as they read his book, they are sneering at him. He has no place. There is no place for a real soldier in a world of Boy Scouts. There is no place for an adult in a world of small-hearted children. There is no road back.

CLIFTON P. FADIMAN

Eighty Years After

James Fenimore Cooper. By Henry Walcott Boynton. The Century Company. $5.

BECAUSE of his strict injunction upon his family there has been no authorized biography of James Fenimore Cooper, the first, the most prolific, and the most widely known novelist in our literature. And the critics and biographers of this age, who have so sedulously undertaken the revaluation of our nineteenth-century men of letters, have either neglected him or dismissed him slightingly. It is time, one agrees with Mr. Boynton, that Cooper be taken back into the fold, a subject for serious consideration.

The present volume takes on the dignity, two generations removed, of an authorized biography. Mr. James Fenimore Cooper, grandson of the novelist, published two volumes of "Correspondence" in 1922. Now he has given Mr. Boynton "full access to a great body of family letters and books and documents, many of which have never been seen by anyone outside the Fenimore Cooper family" and has shown a "sustaining interest" in this book. We are confronted then with a work of first importance, one which should be weighed and criticized as such—a volume which must, from the standpoint of relative history, take precedence over Professor T. R. Lounsbury's "Life" (1885), to be found in the American Men of Letters series, the best biography we have had, but one which is, as its author admits, short on first-hand evidence. And so if no unexpected disclosures vitally affecting the story emerge from Mr. Boynton's study, if the picture that he gives us, though colored of course by the mind and temper of the biographer, differs little from that which Lounsbury and the "Correspondence" have together portrayed, this volume has the negative merit of settling once and for all—so far as the family material can do so—the facts. Whatever there is is here. There is no more—though much, as Mr. Boynton intimates, may have been destroyed.

I think Mr. Boynton has made a good piece of work out of his material in spite of a few irritating slips—poor proofreading, a number of ambiguous, cloudy, or evasive sentences and paragraphs, a gratuitous fling at Poe, a postcript in which sound opinion mingles with a good deal of sweet nonsense, and the like. And with the best intentions in the world, I have no doubt, he has committed the universal sin of authorized biographers—he has lost his sense of perspective. It is a natural result of prolonged concentration on a great man when one has access to source material that one comes to see one's hero in an exaggerated light. In his generalizations Mr. Boynton admits Cooper's failings; but in specific instances he is never able to catch him in any serious fault.

It is apparent, however, that Cooper was a man of substance, character, and quality. He had a fine courage—even though that was warped by prejudice, acerbity, and often bad judgment. He had a splendid gift for friendship and held most of his friends through the thick and thin of his battles with his townsfolk, the press, and in the courts; but he did turn a few into bitter enemies. He loved and was both devoted and just to his wife and children, even though he was a stern believer in the authority of the head of the house, and even though he did resent the desertion of two of his daughters when they married. He was a friend of artists and in a small way a sponsor of art in America, even if he was quite ignorant of its essential values. And he was an honest writer (as witness his account of the Battle of Lake Erie in his Navy History, where he took the unpopular point of view and stirred up a hornets' nest), but often an illogical thinker.

Cooper wrote books to make money as did Scott and Dumas. He was never in the strictest sense a literary man at all. But his work was done in a serious professional spirit, and as an honest craftsman he grew to love it. He did each job as well as he could. The result is a splendid body of work, a permanent contribution to his country's literature. In spite of much bad writing (although I can't say I am sure what that means), and in spite of his many stiff, wooden characters (and we tend to exaggerate here unless we consider also the novels of his contemporaries, the spirit and conventions of the times), he did, as Mr. Boynton points out, write many glorious passages, whole chapters of great beauty. He created unforgettable characters and he recreated pages of history. He did not, as Mr. Boynton claims for him, "invent, for purposes of fiction, the sea and the sailor." Surely Smollett, for one, had preceded him. And the sea and the sailor have been subjects for the tale-teller from time immemorial. But he was the direct forerunner of the more recent romancers of the sea, from Marryat to Conrad. His books live today in a score of languages. Those able to read books that lie outside the spirit of their age—even among educated people, the number would seem to be surprisingly small—will find, I venture to say, if they have not looked into Cooper since youth, a surprise in store for them if they pick up one of the "Leatherstocking" series, or "The Spy," "The Pilot," "Red Rover," or "Wing and Wing." Recently there has been a revival of interest in Dumas. Undoubtedly there will soon be one in Cooper.

In a five-dollar, authorized life of a great American writer a full chronology and a complete bibliography should have been included in addition to the excellent index.

FRED T. MARSH

Jobs—for Gentiles

Christians Only. By Heywood Broun and George Britt. The Vanguard Press. $2.50.

MR. BROUN and Mr. Britt have shown a characteristic courage in thus boldly attacking a problem which they were advised to leave alone. Many Jews expressed the view that discrimination might be strengthened if attention were called to it, but the authors of "Christians Only" hold that truth comes best out of full and free discussion and that the under-cover activity of anti-Semitism should be brought into the open.

We have heard, all of us, that discrimination exists in this country against the Jew, and here we have spread out before us many of the details of this discrimination. That the details are often so trivial constitutes but another commentary on the fantastic capacity of human beings to make life difficult for one another. After a survey of current attitudes from Peter Stuyvesant to Henry Ford, present-day exhibits are offered to the reader under the subjects of liberal education, professional education, employment agencies, employers, clubs, hotels, etc. A great many names are named—more power to the authors—and conclusions regarding the employment situation in New York City are set down specifically: Jews encounter more handicaps downtown than uptown; Jewish women seem to have a slightly harder time than men (that point must be ruled out, since the same is true of Gentile women); highly distinctive names are at a disadvantage; Jews have more difficulty in ob-

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taining secretarial and stenographic work, dictaphone operation, positions with public utilities, railroads, banks, insurance companies, lawyers' offices, brokerage houses, and in department-store salesmanship; lines easier to enter are garment and fur trades, textiles, markets, certified public accounting, manufacturing, moving pictures and theaters, retail stores dealing in drugs, jewelry, and the like, specialty shops, and restaurants. It is stated categorically that "the employment field in New York reeks with bitterness . . . The Jew out of work who is looking for a job in New York faces odds of about ten to one against him." With the first statement I agree, but the second I do not believe. I seriously question whether in normal times unemployment is any more marked among Jewish than among other groups.

Mr. Broun and Mr. Britt have largely been content to present their facts, expecting those facts to speak for themselves. The difficulty with this is that the Jews already know the facts and the Gentiles—by and large—don't care. In the last chapter, The Way Out, it is suggested that intermarriage, a decline in orthodox observances on both sides, exploration of the unconscious, ridicule, and the cultivation of laziness ("after all, only active and energetic people can maintain prejudice"—a sentence which one inevitably ascribes to Mr. Broun) will assist in a solution of the problem. To which I should like to add the resolute suppression by the Jews of the "persecution complex," and the protection of their children, on the ground of mental hygiene, against moving recitals of those old, sad tales of evils in other lands. Jews and Gentiles need together to accept our joint responsibility for making the future better than the past. "Christians Only" is a valiant beginning in the necessary stock-taking.

LORINE PRUETTE

Humanity Under Bolshevism

Red Bread. By Maurice Hindus. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. $3.50.

MAURICE HINDUS has a simple mind. He understands with his eyes and ears. He cares and knows more about the personal reaction than about politics and problems of national economy. Such a bent, together with a fine gift for dramatization, makes him a master of narrative and description. Under his pen, a scene or a conversation becomes exciting. But he is weak in analyzing a policy and in presenting an abstract idea—in exposition generally. All these characteristics explain his great appeal to an American audience. And for all these reasons "Red Bread" is much better than "Humanity Uprooted." "Humanity Uprooted" answers the need for an elementary account of what might happen to religion, the family, love, and human relations in Bolshevik Russia. But the thinking is often loose; the goal sometimes becomes an accomplished fact; there is too obvious dissociation on the author's part from what he believes or from what, writing as he does, he ought to believe; and analyses suffer from superficiality. "Red Bread," on the other hand, is almost faultless—except, here and there, for some water in the style. And its success is due to the fact that in it Hindus does just what he can do best—tell what he has observed and recount vividly what others have told him.

In "Broken Earth," the best of his books, Hindus described what happened to his native Russian village from the time he left it as a boy until 1925. He showed the first impact of the revolution on the peasantry. Last year he returned to that same village. He found it in the throes of collectivization. Collectivization, Hindus writes, is the "most colossal revolution that mankind has ever witnessed." In the event of even partial achievement, according to Hindus, "it will transfigure Russia as nothing else that the Bolsheviks have launched or have planned to launch." And it is this stupendous process—as important to the rest of the world as to the U. S. S. R.—that Hindus traces. He does it extremely well.

If you think human nature cannot change, read Hindus's story of the peasant youngster who intended to give his added wealth to his father's collective. "We have deposited the word riches in the archives," the boy told Hindus as they both walked barefooted over the dusty country road. Or read the tale of the former landlord who decided with his family that "we must start life over again as though we were newly born," and then joined the *kolkhoz,* or collective. Normally, human nature undergoes such slight modification that the people with poor mental eyesight claim it does not vary at all. In Russia today, however, and especially under collectivization, the mutations are so marked, so vital, and so far-reaching that no one can miss them. Hindus paints the types and social characteristics which are beginning to emerge. How does the backward "dark" mujik without culture or education fit into a collectivist society? The answer will be found in "Red Bread."

If you think there is no freedom of expression in Russia, read how the peasants poured out their complaints and counter-revolutionary thoughts to Hindus as they fed him milk, black bread, and cucumbers. They do it to anybody who comes along, whether they know him or not. You find the same thing in William C. White's "These Russians" and in the writings of every man who travels up and down the Soviet Union. Hindus has given the black side of collectivization together with the bright side. He has not tampered with or embellished his material. It is fascinating enough without that. The book smells of the soil and the sweat of the Russian village—so loyal has the author been to the original, and so well does he know the original.

I know of no book which excels "Red Bread" in indicating how the Russian peasant's soul and thought are reacting to recent revolutionary developments—his new outlook on religion, on family life, on work, and his new relationship to the Soviets and society. If you doubt that the Bolshevik regime is stable and safe or that collectivization has immediate advantages over mujik farming, read Hindus. Whether he wished it or not, he has done a great service to the revolution and to the cause of spreading the truth about Russia.

LOUIS FISCHER

Lascelles Abercrombie

The Poems of Lascelles Abercrombie. Oxford University Press. $2.50.

TO avoid tormenting his patience, the reader should turn first to Mr. Abercrombie at his best, which is to be found in the Four Short Plays toward the end of this volume. Then, in order, he should read the plays Judith and Deborah, the Twelve Idyls, three of the shorter dramatic poems—Blind, Mary, and Katrina—and, finally, the light and not very important play Phoenix. The remaining two hundred pages may well be left uncut, for except in occasional lines they are not worth reading.

For the critic, however, Mr. Abercrombie's early work is not without interest, because his final triumph is the triumph of poetry over the "poetic." Obsessed at the beginning by conventional ideas about the content and diction of verse, he presented us with much inflated eloquence on such capitalized abstractions as Memory, Spirit, Awe, Consciousness, Wisdom, Motherhood, Destiny, and "Thirst and his grisly band Of plagues." His pages were filled also with poetic words and phrases: plashy marge, starry gear, high-birtht, bad horde,

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catcht cold; sware, spake, unware, ken, bewrayed, drave, enow, ware, yare, inly, trow; splitten, loaden; alligartha (for alligator); and the following version of a stubborn but strictly iambic number: "A hundred seven and twenty languages." That the poet should finally have extricated himself from such practices and concluded by writing direct and powerful dramatic verse is a pleasing marvel.

Mr. Abercrombie's mature work is still flawed by the fact that his motive is too obviously symbolic. Neither in the dramatic poems nor in the poetic dramas is he interested in character or situation; it is the moral that juggles the wires. Even in Judith, a reworking of the Biblical tale with skilful emphasis on the effect of her voluntary rape upon her desire for purity, the final speech of Ozias is used to show Judith as a model of "Virginity and Perfection." This limitation is transcended, however, when Mr. Abercrombie, in the Short Plays—The Adder, for example—contrives situations that fuse drama and symbol.

In his own genre Mr. Abercrombie is a good poet and an effective dramatist. Contemporary English poetry is enriched by the personal bouquet of his contribution.

MORRIS U. SCHAPPES

Books in Brief

Contemporary Social Movements. By Jerome Davis. The Century Company. $5.

This is a mammoth reference book of very great utility. We may not know where we are going, but we are certainly on our way to some other social order than the present irresponsible capitalism. Hence, it is highly desirable to become acquainted with the alternatives which are currently proposed. Professor Davis has been a conscientious student of social-reform programs and in this book has brought together a vast body of descriptive and analytical material. He deals with Utopian socialism, Marxian socialism, communism, fascism, the cooperative movement, the British Labor Party, the backwardness of the American labor movement, and the efforts to bring about world peace. The latter he correctly regards as a prerequisite of any sound program of domestic reconstruction. In addition to the textual content there are many relevant quotations from leaders in all the reform movements. The volume thus combines the usefulness of the textbook and the source book. Professor Davis's attitude toward social radicalism is one of discriminating tolerance and fairness. A few criticisms may be leveled against this excellent work. The continuity of Marxian socialism and communism is not quite adequately emphasized. One might well continue with the popular illusion that they are different and independent movements. Syndicalism is given only four or five pages, though it may prove far more important in the future history of man than socialism. Guild and revisionist socialism are also given rather scant notice. Anarchism is overlooked. Doubtless Professor Davis was guided by the criterion of present interest and immediate practicality in making his selection of topics and material. All in all, it is a book which is indispensable to the college student and the citizen who aspires to a civilized view of the world about us.

The Physical Basis of Personality. By Charles R. Stockard. W. W. Norton and Company. $3.50.

Dr. Stockard, an eminent anatomist and embryologist, has in this book attempted to summarize some of the data of experimental embryology. The effort is important in that it is one of the first popularizations of a fascinating field of biological research. More than two-thirds of the book is concerned with animal experimentation. Human analogies are drawn with commendable conservatism. Dr. Stockard is at his best in dealing with the experimental modification of embryonal development. Here he very clearly describes the phenomena of normal growth and the factors producing abnormality. Monstrosities are described, not to amaze the reader, but to illustrate principles the disturbance of which has prevented the formation of a coordinated being with organs in proper functional relationship. Most praiseworthy is Dr. Stockard's constant emphasis of the cooperative action of heredity and environment, which he always considers as two factors working together in the development of any characteristic of an organism. The term "personality" is used very broadly to indicate the structural and chemical make-up of an organism, be it a single cell or a human being. Except for a brief unfortunate passage, discussion of personality in the usual psychological sense is wisely avoided. Too much emphasis is placed on the endocrine glands, and statements are made for which there is no experimental support. It would have been better to have omitted such speculative and controversial material from a popular treatise. Dr. Stockard's designation of human beings as of two types, "linear and lateral," and his description of the characteristic behavior of each type seem too dogmatic for the subject in its present state. The reader will be left with more certain opinions than perhaps the author has.

Benedict Arnold, the Proud Warrior. By Charles Coleman Sellers. Minton, Balch and Company. $3.50.

Mr. Sellers writes in such a lively manner that the serious-minded reader's first impression of his book is likely to be disparaging. As a matter of fact, a good deal of careful and up-to-date research appears to have gone into the preparation of the book, and while little that is positively new about Arnold is presented, Mr. Sellers so manages the details of events as to make them emphasize the salient features of Arnold's character—his self-consciousness and self-seeking, his lack of scruple about means, his quarrelsomeness in his relations with his superiors, and, of course, his extraordinary daring and persistence. The best parts of the book are those dealing with Arnold's early life, his Canadian expedition, and his years in England and elsewhere after American independence had been won. Mr. Sellers wisely avoids searching for remote or novel explanations of Arnold's treason, but contents himself with building his narrative at this point upon the explanations which lie open on the surface of events or are consonant with Arnold's character—namely, his overweening personal ambition, his irritation over the shabby treatment accorded him by Congress, his conclusion that the American cause was on its last legs, and his desire for higher rank and sounder money than America had to offer. The result, while in no sense a whitewashing of Arnold, is a picture which is the better for not being framed in reflections on the morals of the case.

Lord Melbourne. By Bertram Newman. The Macmillan Company. $4.50.

There was need of a new life of Melbourne, and while Mr. Newman does not pretend to have added much to what was already known of Melbourne's career, he has made good use of some recent sources and elaborates effectively the portrait which Strachey paints in his "Queen Victoria." It was as Prime Minister from 1835 to 1841 that Melbourne served England best, for the first years of Victoria's reign fall into that period, and but for the influence which Melbourne acquired over the Queen by his skill and good sense the beginning of the reign might have been disastrous. Mr. Newman is at his best in this part of the story, but he also gives an interesting and readable sketch of Melbourne's early life, his short official service in Ireland while Catholic emancipation was being pre-

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pared, and his troubled career as Home Secretary in the period of serious labor outbreaks and the first Reform Bill. The dramatic opportunity, on the contrary, afforded by the passion of Melbourne's wife, Caroline, for Byron has not been adequately seized.

American Negro Poetry. Edited by James Weldon Johnson. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

This is a revised edition of the anthology of Negro poetry first published ten years ago. At that time the book helped to confirm the fact that the Negro had made his very valuable contribution to American poetry. The preface to the first edition gave a complete history of the development of Negro poetry and a critical estimate of the various Negro poets. Such a preface would not be necessary today, for within these past ten years much has been written concerning the Negro and his art. The revised edition is important in that it includes contributions from all the younger Negro poets: Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Bennett, Sterling A. Brown, Arna Bontemps, Frank Horne, Helene Johnson, Waring Cuney. This younger generation is, as Mr. Johnson says, "freer of the approbation or deprecation of their white environment."

Architecture

A Temple of Jehu

"Time is the what with which some dolls are stuffed"

WHEN they built the Chrysler Building they put on a lot of shiny work just for fun; but not so when they built the Empire State. On top there is a "mooring mast," to be sure, but that was just the publicity man's addition of sex appeal. The shiny metal below is the important thing, the strips of chrome-nickel steel that shinny up the frame like streaks of Jehu. They were not meant to be just "ornamental" —they meant business. Allow me by explaining those metal strips to illustrate a certain fundamental change in the old art of architecture. We used to think of it as associated with "eternity," by which we meant only permanence; but now architecture has become completely the child of time. The dance is hardly more so.

This is how it went. When they figured the economics of the Empire State Building, they decided on eighty-five floors. Yet considering the carrying charges on land worth $16,000,000, they could not afford to wait for all those floors to be built. Being Americans they then decided to build all eighty-five in the time usually required for thirty; and that's where the vertical metal strips come in, as one of the refinements for the sake of speed.

These vertical strips were fastened at intervals directly to the frame, and what they did was to carry forward the principle of articulation. They served to divide the window from the wall. To one side of any strip there could go up a column of stone, to the other side a stack of windows with aluminum panels between. No longer did the window have to be fitted to the stone, or the stone cut to an accurate arris at the window opening, since the metal strip covered the edge. See what that meant: if the stone gang was held up by delay, the window gang nevertheless could proceed. Again: the stones could come from the quarry ready-cut, since there was no further fitting to be done on the job. In short, there was almost such a thing at the Empire State as a factory assembly of standard units. It would have been complete, I believe, except for a few obstacles such as pernicious labor habits and the Building Code.

He has found

A NEW WAY

to tell a story

FROM DAY TO DAY

by FERDYNAND GOETEL

Introduction by John Galsworthy

This sensational newcomer from Poland has become the talk of the literary season here and abroad. He employs a method completely new to fiction in his novel of an author's love for three women, in which the past and present run side by side. "A triumph . . . Pulses with life."—John Galsworthy. "Vivid and full of feeling. Jocular, malicious, devastating."—Frank Swinnerton. Selected by The Literary Guild. $2.50.

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MEN AND FORCES OF OUR TIME

by VALERIU MARCU

Eden and Cedar Paul, distinguished translators of this volume, say of the author "Though Marcu is unique, there is in his writing a curious mingling of the flavors of Montaigne and Strachey—which means that Marcu is a great writer, and not just a man of the fleeting moment." In this book of ideas, knitted together by a red thread of present day personalities, Marcu uses Kemel Pasha, Mussolini, Lenin, Chesterton, Clemenceau and other contemporary giants as springboards for his agile mind. $2.50.

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"A secret gate into the wonderland of childhood."
—CHARLES FRANCIS POTTER

TROTT AND HIS LITTLE SISTER

by ANDRÉ LICHTENBERGER

Introduction by Dorothy Canfield Fisher

Thousands of readers in every country in Europe have taken Trott to their hearts, critics have hailed it as a classic of childhood, psychologists have recognized it as one of the most useful guides to parents in child training and understanding. It is published now for the first time in English. "An exceedingly valuable piece of work done with the charm of the French writer and the insight of the psychologist."—H. A. Overstreet. "The priceless feeling of childhood is there in great depth of charm and amusement."—Laurence Stallings, *The Sun.* $2.50.

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The Empire State has sixty-seven elevators, traveling 1,000 feet a minute and timed so that in each bank a car leaves every twenty seconds. This enormous core of swift transportation occupying nearly a third of the "cubage" embodies another story, telling how the building got its shape; time entered once more in the choice of a location, and in the guise of "obsolescence" it will cause the building's death. Time is the important fourth dimension of our new buildings, and it is just as integral as the materials are.

Yet I have chosen just the illustration of the metal strips because they worked over so beautifully into the design. While serving their humble use, they flash wonderfully in the sun; they make the character of the enterprise manifest; in their swift upward streak they tell the story—Organization! Speed! When at the top and bottom and in the lobby the designers tried allegory and decoration, they seemed to be merely fumbling around. This despite the fact that Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon are among our keenest planners of buildings—or because of it.

DOUGLAS HASKELL

Films

The Shrinking of Personality

IT has been my experience this week to see, one after another, a number of films in which the principal part was played by a famous actor. The actors included George Arliss, John Barrymore, and, among the lesser lights, Constance Bennett and Jack Holt. As I now try to recall my main impressions I am struck by a rather puzzling fact. None of the popular actors I saw stands out before me as a personality with whom I had a direct and all but physical contact. I know that on the stage some of these actors and others of equal gifts were and are able to escape the shell of the characters they represent and to fill the entire theater with their own beings, so that one feels as if one almost touched them. More phantom-like, but no less expansive and penetrating, were the personalities of the famous stars that radiated from the silent screen. Although the constant stressing of personal appeal was motivated by commercial aims and helped to cramp the progress of the silent film, there can be no question of the success of the producers in establishing their screen stars not merely as favorites with the public, but as personalities that somehow (sometimes, no doubt, through mere inflation) transcended their screen characters and came into a direct contact with the audience. The appeal of Chaplin, Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, Pola Negri, or Jannings in the old days of silent films had that quality of expansion.

The situation with the talking pictures seems to be paradoxically different. The personal magnetism of the actor has lost its force. His entire personality has shrunk to something that is only a little more than the character he represents. This does not necessarily mean that his personality is completely submerged in the character. More often than not the reverse is actually the case, and the same George Arliss, for instance, will be seen in a number of characters that differ but little from one another, being merely variations of Mr. Arliss's acting personality. This may be set against Mr. Arliss as an actor, for resourceful and accomplished as he is, emotionally he is always the same ("The Millionaire" at the Winter Garden is a case in point). But I doubt that his failure to loom as large from the speaking screen as he does from the stage, and as he probably would from the silent screen, is due to any lack of magnetism in his acting personality. The reason, I am inclined to think, lies rather in the curious effect that the addition of mechanical speech has had on the relationship between the screen actor and the audience. The change in the actor's position has been made in two diametrically opposed directions. On the one hand, he has returned to the stage methods of acting and story-telling. On the other hand, he has stepped beyond the conventional stage settings into the world of natural surroundings. The same world existed in the silent picture. Yet only the addition of speech has taken it right out of the theater building, away from immediate contact with the audience, and placed it in a space of its own. Bound to his surroundings the actor, too, has become more remote, with the consequent loss in intimacy, in direct contact, and in the unobstructed flow of the magnetic force that conveys to the spectator the actor's power and stature.

The same shrinking of personality that was noticed in Mr. Arliss is also seen in John Barrymore. Excellent as he is in his flamboyant theatricalism in "Svengali" (Hollywood), he never succeeds in coming off the screen. And here, as an actor, he also suffers in another sense. Mr. Barrymore's acting has an unmistakable rhythmic quality, although not always quite precise and certain in its pattern. Gordon Craig, writing of Henry Irving, described this quality as "the dancing and singing of one's role." But it is obvious that a rhythmic pattern built on the stage cannot be transferred bodily to the screen. In fact, it must be completely rebuilt in obedience to the entirely different principle of screen rhythm. No such attempt was made in the case of Mr. Barrymore in "Svengali," and what emerges from the screen, striking as it is in individual scenes, lacks the swing and rhythmic unity of histrionic display that belong to this type of acting on the ordinary stage.

One cannot apply the same standard of acting to Miss Constance Bennett, but able actress that she is, she seems to be constantly miscast. In "Born to Love" (Mayfair) she is seen again in one of those maudlin parts of a helpless, suffering beauty, suffering largely because of the stupidities of the plot. A little more character and strength would make Miss Bennett into a more believable and interesting woman. But, then, Hollywood has its own standards of interest and credibility.

"Subway Express" (Globe) is not remarkable for any individual acting, but deserves praise for excellent comedy and flowing direction.

ALEXANDER BAKSHY

Drama

The Pulitzer Prize Play

THE Civic Repertory Theater, which had announced that at the end of the present season it would take a year's recess, closed recently with tears and triumph. There were real tears, I am told, shed not only by certain members of the permanent cast who found it painful to be doing for the last time what had been done so often and so well, but by many spectators whose devotion, coming now to a climax, had to express itself thus. The regret of anyone over the absence of Miss Le Gallienne and her company for two summers and a winter must be real enough. Yet that regret may be tempered for the moment by the circumstance that the closing hour has not quite arrived after all. The old theater on Fourteenth Street is as dark as any tomb, but light still flickers on eleven members of the cast who have taken "Alison's House" uptown to the Ritz Theater for a few weeks—or as long as there are people left with curiosity as to the merits of the Pulitzer prize play for 1930-31.

Those merits seem to be mighty few. Susan Glaspell's pen never moved more languidly than it moved through the

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composition of this false, sentimental piece about the life-after-death of Emily Dickinson. Miss Glaspell has written before, and written better, about the influence of a dead woman upon her family and friends. It is an interesting theme, if a somewhat artificial one, and much might be done with it. But very little has been done in the present instance, and the little that has been done is offensively false. For two intelligent and dreary acts we sit watching the family of Alison Stanhope (Emily Dickinson) get ready to move out of the house in Iowa (Massachusetts) where she once wrote all her poetry. Her brother, her sister, and several nieces and nephews let us know in turn, and at great length, how they feel about the moving. That is about all that happens until the third act, when a sudden excitement is generated by the discovery of an old wallet full of poems which have never been published. The poems have remained all along in the possession of Agatha, Alison's surviving sister, who years ago received them from their author with the injunction to burn them. She has never been able to give them to the flames, however, and now at the moment of her death the most she can do is thrust them into the hands of Elsa, a niece of Alison's who—the point is very clearly labored—has "faced life," unlike her aunt, who only evaded it and wrote poetry about it. Elsa, in other words, has not refused the lover who offered himself. Well, it is Elsa who breaks the wallet open and reads—and finds in two minutes the "secret" of Alison. In these wonderful poems—they are the most wonderful, of course, she ever wrote—the "story" is told, and told so clearly that Elsa can only gasp and weep as the sheets flutter one by one to the carpeted floor.

Emily Dickinson has suffered many indignities from her biographers, but none so heavy-handed as this. The falseness of the play consists in its saying so simply that a great poet—whether it is Emily or Alison does not matter—is personal in this fashion. No known poet has ever been dissected by a literary surgeon so skilful that he could pause and say: "This part, gentlemen, is the person and this part the poet." Artists do not reveal themselves, or use themselves, or perhaps know themselves, that well; and usually we shall find that they have had other things to bother about in their art than their strictly private affairs. So in special degree with Emily Dickinson, who to be sure gave up a lover and left her manuscript to be burned by an unmarried sister, but whose recently published "love poems" are more of a mystery than biography will ever solve. The more we know about her, the less we know about the significance of her poems to herself—except that we do know their immense significance to her as poetry.

Miss Glaspell has written, of course, intelligently, and Miss Le Gallienne, who takes the part of Elsa, has both acted and directed with her accustomed competence. But "Alison's House" has none of that vitality and truth which we have a right to expect of a Pulitzer prize play, and which as a matter of fact might have been detected in half a dozen plays passed over by the committee of judges. To say more would be contempt of court; and useless. MARK VAN DOREN

"Devil in the Mind," a play by Andreyev which subscribed to no current fashion, was recently taken off the boards after a week of poor houses. It deserved better treatment, for it was much more interesting and clear than Andreyev usually is, and Leo Bulgakov, playing the mad part of Dr. Kerjen, offered a specimen of acting such as we seldom have a chance to see. His only defect was that he muted the end of perhaps one sentence in every three. This seemed real enough, since one could be convinced that the doctor as Mr. Bulgakov played him must have talked thus; but it was often important that the audience hear what was being said. The fact that it could not do so must have had something to do with the failure of an otherwise valuable piece. M. V. D.

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A New South Africa

By R. S. ALEXANDER

Cape Town, April 15

WITH the current session of Parliament the history of South Africa enters a new phase. The old Cape franchise, the retention of which was specially fought for at the time of union twenty years ago, will within the next few weeks have disappeared as an effective political instrument. Hitherto, white males over twenty-one have been admitted to the franchise in the three other provinces of the Union, while the Cape retained its small property or wage qualification and the ability to read and write as the basis for a franchise which included all males, whether white, Indian, Malay, Chinese, colored, or native, who conformed to these requirements. This franchise did actually give the non-white elements the deciding majority in certain constituencies. Accordingly, while the Nationalists always railed against it, the South African Party, having managed to secure for itself the support of Dr. Abdurahman, himself a Malay and an adroit and skilful leader of the Cape colored people, was careful to dissociate itself from any open attempt to restrict or remove this franchise. The 1930 session of Parliament, however, found the party in a dilemma. A bill for the enfranchisement throughout the Union of all white women over the age of twenty-one was brought forward as a non-party measure by the Prime Minister. The South African Party was pledged as a party to support votes for women, but as the Government had announced previously that in the event that women received the vote the colored women would be included, the measure as it appeared took it unaware. As a change in the constitution the bill required a two-thirds' majority of both assembly and senate, sitting together. This was easily obtained, the few dissentients being those who represented constituencies with a determining colored vote. By this change, of course, the strength of the colored vote was definitely lessened in all constituencies.

The full implications of the measure did not, however, dawn on the country as a whole until it became clear that this was a short cut, and an extremely clever one, to the extension of the same franchise to all the white males of the Cape over the age of twenty-one. A bill to this effect is now before Parliament, and there is no doubt whatever that it will become the law of the land. When it is so, all white men and women in the Cape over twenty-one except criminals and lunatics will have a vote, whereas no colored women will have a vote, and only such colored men as possess the old Cape qualifications. These, as regards the literacy test, have up to now been more or less nominal, but hints are forthcoming that in future the test will be far more meticulously applied. This policy, in a country where elementary education is compulsory for whites only, and where thousands of colored and native children are unprovided with any form of schooling, is grimly significant of the new attitude of frank cynicism toward the rights of the non-whites that is the distinguishing feature of public policy in South Africa today.

The native bills are at present before a select committee and will not be considered this session. But of their main provisions there is no doubt, or that these will be passed by a majority of both houses sitting together. Their net result will be to disfranchise the natives of the Cape, giving them as their sole link with Parliament six senators elected by themselves from among the whites of the country. Even the subjects on which these representatives may speak and vote are, however, to be specifically laid down and restricted. A measure at present in committee stage, indicative of the definitely repressive policy now entered upon, is the Native Service Contract Bill. Under this bill, which applies especially to natives living on farm lands, "the native guardian of any native male who is or appears to be not more than eighteen years of age," or of any native female to whom the same applies, may bind this minor native over by verbal or written contract without any supervision or investigation. If the control of any land on which natives have been allowed to live passes into other hands, the new employer takes over these so-called labor tenants as of right. The labor tenant, it is true, "may, within three months after having ascertained that the control of such land has passed to another employer, terminate such contract." But it is not laid down that it is the duty of the new employer, or of the old one, to notify the labor tenant of the change. There are many other fairly severe regulations in the act, contravention of any one of which is by a special section made punishable by a whipping not exceeding five strokes. A farmer is unlikely to invoke the aid of the nearest police station, perhaps many miles away, in such a case. The section is commonly taken as legalizing floggings by farmers of native servants, which have hitherto been controlled by the natives' right of appeal to the law.

The temper behind legislation such as this, a temper twenty years ago utterly impossible to the Cape, is now widespread. In the matter of public health, for example, the lack of medical attention in the country districts and the terrific infantile mortality among the natives are matters of perpetual comment on the part of doctors and missionaries. "We are spending more on cattle diseases than on the relief of sickness among native people," is a statement made recently by a well-known missionary. During the years 1927-28 there were in the Orange Free State no cases of plague among Europeans; among non-Europeans there were thirty-four cases with twenty-seven deaths. There were in the same district in the same year 52 cases of typhus among Europeans with no deaths; among non-Europeans there were 1,279 cases with 208 deaths. Again, the present depression has led to an increase in the number of applicants for old-age pensions. From this benefit all natives and Asiatics are excluded. But even the colored people, not a large number, who do benefit, receive only £9 a year if their income is under £27 a year, and no pension at all if their income is £33 a year or more. Whites, however, receive a pension of £30 a year with an income of £24 a year

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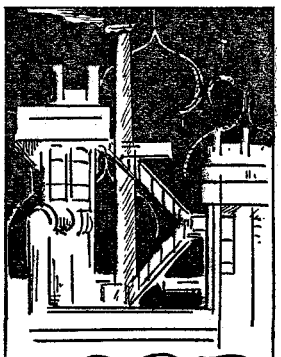

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Against the tacit assumption behind legislation, neglect, and repression that the natives are a negligible part of the South African nation, except in so far as they are economically useful, the courts themselves are not proof. A native snatched a girl's bag from her and received a six months' sentence of hard labor. A farmer discharged a loaded rifle at a native laborer on his farm because the native refused to obey an order to plow his land, saying, "It is the day for plowing our own lands." The farmer shot the native in both feet, inflicting injuries which deprived the native of the use of his feet for more than six months and which may leave him a cripple. The magistrate, in sentencing the farmer, fined him fifteen pounds or six weeks' imprisonment with hard labor. A native who was one of a gang that robbed and assaulted a storekeeper was sentenced to five years' hard labor and six strokes. A farm manager, not yet sentenced, has been committed for trial for shooting through the knee a native who had a stick in his hand which the accused ordered him to throw away. The native refused, as he was merely resting the stick on the ground, and the farm manager then proceeded to fetch his gun and shoot the native. But the most outstanding case of injustice recently is perhaps that in which a white man and a native woman were brought before the same circuit court on consecutive days, charged with cohabitation, which between white and native is an indictable offense. The native woman pleaded guilty and was given a severe sentence; the white man pleaded not guilty and was acquitted.

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